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FROM THE GIFT OF

JOHN CRAIG

OF BOSTON

FOR BOOKS RELATING TO THE
THEATRE

THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Magazine Devoted to the
Enjoyment of the Play and the Theatre

EDITOR—Theodore Ballou Hinckley

Advisory and Contributing Editors

BRANDER MATTHEWS, Columbia University.

THOMAS H. DICKINSON, University of Wisconsin.

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BENEDICT PAPOT, Chautauqua Institution.

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THE DRAMA

A QUARTERLY REVIEW



Michael Artzybashev By Thomas Seltzer

WAR—A Play in Four Acts
By Michael Artzybashev

The Little Country Theatre
By Alfred Arvold

The Folly of Theatrical Advertising
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Eugene Walter: An American Dramatic
Realist By Francis Lamont Peirce

Mr. James Joyce and the Modern Stage
By Ezra Pound

Dramatists Critically Studied
A Review, by Archibald Henderson

New York's Christmas Fantasy
By Grace Humphrey

Book Notes and Bibliographies

FEBRUARY

No. 21 1916

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Author of "Versets," "Vers les Routes Absurdes," &c.

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THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

February, 1916

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Editor, THEODORE BALLOU HINCKLEY

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FEBRUARY CONTRIBUTORS

Annie Nathan Meyer was born in New York. She is known as the founder of Barnard College, as she initiated the movement over twenty-five years ago to open a college for women affiliated with Columbia University. She has been an active member of the Board of Trustees ever since, and with her keen interest in the students' careers has kept in personal touch with large numbers of them, being called affectionately by them "The Girls' Trustee." Her education was obtained at home and entirely on her own initiative through reading, for she attended school less than a year of her life. She is the author of *Woman's Work in America*, 1891; *Helen Brent, M.D.*, 1893; *My Park Book*, 1898; *Robert Annys*, 1901; *The Dominant Sex*, 1911; *The Dreamer*, 1912; also of various essays and stories in newspapers and magazines. One of her plays, *A Dinner of Herbs*, was produced by the Sargent Dramatic School, and another, *The Spur*, was produced at the Cort Theatre in New York for the Belgian Relief Fund. For some years before she began work as a playwright she devoted herself particularly to American art, being the first American writer to have an article on an American artist in *The London Studio*. She is a member of the Barnard Club, the MacDowell Club and the Adirondack League Club, in connection with which she has had a camp for twenty years, being an ardent lover of nature, an expert oarswoman and a capital shot. A series of articles by her on camp life appeared in the *New York Evening Post*. She is also a talented pianist.

FEBRUARY CONTRIBUTORS

Thomas Seltzer was born thirty-nine years ago in "Little Russia" in the Government of Poltava, in a small village near Kiev. His family, through reduced circumstances, was obliged to emigrate to America, and at the age of eleven he was set to work in a sweat shop; but conditions growing better, his older sister insisted upon his getting a public school education. In the high school he won a scholarship for the University of Pennsylvania and made his way through the college entirely on scholarships and by private tutoring.

After holding various positions with professional men and publishing houses he became a reporter on three Pittsburgh papers. For a while he was an associate editor of *Current Literature*, and then took to free lancing, contributing to *Current Literature*, *The Review of Reviews*, *Pearson's*, and other magazines. His chief work, however, has been translating. He made his first large success in the translation of Sudermann's *Song of Songs*. Among other works translated by him are Gorky's *The Spy* and *Mother*, Hauptman's *The Fool in Christ* and *Atlantis*, several of Andreyev's dramas, and lastly, a novel, *Homo Sapiens*, by that most unusual of writers, the Pole, Stanislaw Przybyszewski.

Francis Lamont Peirce is a native of New York State. He was graduated from the University of Rochester in 1907 and was elected to membership in Phi Beta Kappa. He subsequently engaged in newspaper and magazine work. His published magazine articles on literary and artistic subjects include *Bernard Shaw: A Prophet Who Laughs*, *The Literature of Joylessness*, *American Painting in the American Capital*, *The Deadly Drawing Room*, and *A New Portent in American Poetry*. Since 1910 Mr. Peirce has been in the Government service at

FEBRUARY CONTRIBUTORS

Washington, D. C. He was, until early in 1915, on the staff of the United States Civil Service Commission, but is at present an editor of publications in the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce.

Alfred G. Arvold, of Wisconsin by birth, was graduated from the state university in 1905. His life experience has taken him from high school teaching, telegraph editing on a newspaper, contributing to magazines and chautauqua work, to a position as Head of the Department of Public Discussion and Social Service in the North Dakota Agricultural College. The novelty and success of *The Little Country Theatre*, of which he is the founder, has, however, earned him his great distinction.

Grace Humphrey is the writer of the two articles in the November, 1915, *DRAMA*, *The Portmanteau Theatre* and *The Modern Stage Society*. She is especially interested in the experiments in the drama taking place in New York City.

Ezra Pound is the foreign correspondent of *Poetry*. He is the author of *Poems* (2 vols.), and *Cathay*, and the translator of *Sonnets and Ballate of Guido Cavalcanti*. Although his earlier fame was won by translations from Anglo-Saxon and Provençal verse, Mr. Pound's is a name much seen and sought for in the contemporary periodicals which publish poetry. His first contribution to *THE DRAMA* presented the Noh drama with the notes of Ernest Fenollosa.

Archibald Henderson needs little introduction. He is on the faculty of the University of North Carolina and is known as a mathematician of note, a historian, and a leader in the woman's suffrage movement. His published works have covered more than drama, but in that field of effort his leading books are: *George Bernard Shaw: His Life and Works*,

FEBRUARY CONTRIBUTORS

European Dramatists, and The Changing Drama.
His previous articles in **THE DRAMA** are: *Trans-valuation of Contemporary Dramatic Values, The Printed Play: A New Technic, and The Published Play.*

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Number 21

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THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

No. 21

February

1916

MICHAEL ARTZYBASHEV



Of the three living Russian authors who have achieved world fame, Gorky, Andreyev and Artzybashev, Gorky is better known than read in this country, Andreyev is both known and read, though by more limited numbers, while Artzybashev is read more and known less. To enjoy Gorky and Andreyev one must, it seems, be a devotee of literature, and a devotee of literature is always interested in the personalities of its creators. But one can enjoy Artzybashev's writings and concern oneself little about Artzybashev the man. Like the English servant girl who asked the librarian for a copy of *Pamela* to read it for the hundredth time and could not name Richardson, its author, unconscious apparently that it had an author, so many an American will devour a novel like *Sanine* without bothering to pronounce the name of its writer.

Richardson and Artzybashev—a strange collocation! It would seem on the face of it that they are farther removed from each other in the nature and quality of their works than they are even in time. And yet there is a fundamental kinship between the

two. The book on which Richardson's fame rests has made its wide appeal by the predominance of that element in it which is also the predominant note in *Sanine*—love, sex. This element in *Sanine* it is that has given it hundreds of thousands of readers in Russia, Germany, and France and has spread its fame to England and America, where temporarily surrendering our second-nature, puritanism, to our primal instincts, we too are beginning to read it by the thousands.

Nevertheless, in the treatment of their basic material, the natural instincts of man, Richardson and Artzybashev are, as may well be expected, poles apart. Strange as it may seem, the eighteenth century Englishman, for all his artistic crudity and insular narrowness, sees life from a broader, more comprehensively human viewpoint than the consummate Russian artist, the highest expression of extreme modernity. Let this much be said in despite of all the sneers and contemptuous shruggings of the shoulders of our individualist anarchists: Richardson takes a less one-sided view of life than Artzybashev. He finds men living not only by their instincts but by their conventions as well. And he does not inquire whether these conventions were superimposed by tradition, prejudice, or superannuated reason, which is now the very opposite of reason. His task as an artist is merely to take account of them. To ignore them is to ignore factors in human existence which are as surely existent as the natural instincts. Because the question as to whether these conventions are merely secondary forces in human life didn't even present itself to him, he was able to give a more complete picture of life as it actually was in his time. He was not great enough artist to remain impartial. Virtue must be re-

warded, and to that end the natural instincts, though not ignored, must be fought and brought to terms.

Yet the animal part of man fares far better in *Pamela* than virtue does in *Sanine*. Even granting the supremacy of the former, the English novelist gives his enemy, the animal impulses, a fairer chance, relatively to the actual part they play in human conduct, than Artzybashev does to his pet aversion, moral restraint. From first to last in *Sanine*, in the short story, *The Wife*, and in numerous other works, morality, and chiefly sex morality, is made to seem such a small, feeble, pitiful thing, that apart from all other considerations, just in the interest of unprejudiced truth, it must be said: "It is not so. The facts do not warrant it. *Sanine's* presentation of the case is at least as much of an undervaluation of the strength of the ethical factors, as the Puritan's is an exaggeration of them." We turn to page 49 of the Russian edition and find *Sanine* saying:

"I have always wondered why people are so opposed to drink. In my opinion it is only a drunken man who lives the way a man should live."

"Or an animal," Novikov remarked.

"All right. What of it?" *Sanine* retorted. "The fact remains that a drunken man does nothing but what he wants to do. If he wants to drink, he drinks. And he is not ashamed of being jolly and making merry."

"Sometimes he fights, too," Raznichev observed.

"Yes, that's sometimes the case."

"You don't fight when you are drunk?" asked Novikov.

"No. I am more quarrelsome when I am sober. When I am drunk, I am the kindest of men because I forget such a lot of meanness."

"But everybody else is not like you in that respect."

"I am sorry. But what do I care for everybody else? Everybody else isn't anything in the world to me."

"That's not the right way to speak," remarked Novikov.

"Why not, if it's the truth?"

"A nice truth," said Lilya, tossing her head.

"The best I know of," said Ivanov for Sanine.

A very interesting discussion pro and con of the liquor question, and in perfect character, too. Artzybashev is too fine an artist to strike a false note. But when we are left to infer that Sanine has spoken the last word in this, as on all other subjects upon which he pronounces his demolishing dicta, then we must enter our demurrer.

Then what is Artzybashev's strength? It is this: within the limits of that part of the world in which his characters move, he is powerfully, fearfully, mercilessly, often irritatingly true to life. With a touch as sure as Tolstoy's and with his simplicity, too, he conjures before us a picture, a situation, a character, a mood to which we must in honesty bow assent. And it is all the more wonderful because of the simple mechanism with which he produces his effects. There is no straining, nothing in each unit of composition which a child could not do as well. Yet the net result is a product of rare harmony and beauty bringing that satisfaction which only a work of real art can inspire.

When *Sanine* was published, it immediately produced a sensation and aroused a discussion that in volume and intensity was unusual even in Russia, where literary discussions are frequent and serious. No book since the publication of Turgenev's *Fathers*

and *Children*, as Artzybashev himself tells us, stirred up such interest. It was hailed with wild enthusiasm and attacked with savage ferocity. And the author himself frankly admits that "both the eulogies and the condemnations are equally one-sided." His own story of the fortunes and the significance of the book is interesting and illuminating.

"In the year 1903, I wrote *Sanine*. This fact is willfully suppressed by Russian critics; moreover, they try to persuade the public that *Sanine* is an outcome of the reaction of the year 1907, and that I have followed the fashionable tendency of contemporary Russian literature. In reality, however, the novel had been read by the editors of two reviews and by many celebrated authors as early as 1903. Again I owe it to the censorship and the timidity of publishers that it was not brought out at the time. It is an interesting fact that the novel was refused on account of its ideas by the editorial staff of the same monthly review, *Sovremienny Mir*, which some years later begged me to give it to them for publication. In this way *Sanine* made its appearance five years too late. This was very much against it: at the time of its appearance literature had been flooded by streams of pornographic and even homosexual works, and my novel was likely to be judged with these.

"*Sanine* is neither a novel of ethics nor a libel on the younger generation. *Sanine* is the apology for individualism; the hero of the novel is a type. In its pure form this type is still new and rare, but its spirit is in every frank, bold and strong representative of the new Russia. A number of imitators who have never grasped my ideas hastened to turn the success of *Sanine* to their own advantage; they injured me greatly by inundating the literary world

with wantonly obscene writings, thus degrading in the readers' eyes what I wished to express in *Sanine*.

"The critics persisted in ranking me with the number of second-rate imitators of *Sanine* who displayed their 'marketable wares' full of all sorts of offensiveness. Not until recently, when *Sanine* had crossed the frontiers, and translations had appeared in Germany, France, Italy, Bohemia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Denmark, and also, in part, in Japan, were other voices to be heard among the critics. Russia always does grovel before foreign opinion."

The sensational success of *Sanine* has thrust Artzybashev's other works into the background and, as usually happens, has resulted in a one-sided estimate of the author. The fact, however, is that Artzybashev has by no means confined himself to the question of sex. True to the best literary traditions, he reflects the manifold changing interests of Russian contemporary society. His first story, *Pasha Tumanov*, written in 1901, dealt with the evils of the Russian grammar schools, a hotbed of suicides. Some of his best creations, which he began in 1905, are to be found in the stories of the revolution. They are vivid pictures of Russian radical types, and in the rendering of the atmosphere of the Revolution and in the revelation of the motive forces that impelled its actors, they are unexcelled even by Ropshin, who gained signal fame several years later by the publication of his two remarkable books on the same subject. Occasionally Artzybashev takes an excursion into the lower depths as in the psychologic study of *The Shoe Maker*, which is quite in the vein of Gorky. But all this Artzybashev considers as just incidental, foreign to his real mission, which, he says, is to preach the gospel of "anarchic individualism."

Of the two plays he has written, *Jealousy*, published in 1913, bears a strong kinship to *Sanine*, with the erotic element accented to the abnormal. The outbreak of the war turned Russian literature away from the wild current of sex, into which it had been caught up at the end of the Revolution and in which it ran with ever increasing impetus for several years. It is to be hoped that the banishment of exaggerated emotion from the field of Russian literature will be permanent. It has had ample time to do its best and worst, and it has done it. What further function is left to it? Russian life as well as Russian literature can only gain if with the disappearance of the "Sanine Clubs" that sprang up like mushrooms after the publication of the book, has come also the culmination of the cheap literature in imitation of *Sanine* without the genius of its author.

The effect of new conditions upon Artzybashev himself has been marvelously purifying. It seems scarcely credible that the author of *Jealousy* could have written *War* only a little over a year later. With the bigness of his theme the author's art has grown big. In its classic simplicity and restraint *War* is worthy of Turgenev; in its cruel exposition of the logic of horrible facts it reaches the loftiness of the Greek tragedy. In the technique, to be sure, Artzybashev is as anarchic as in his philosophy; but it is the anarchy of the very events the play depicts, an anarchy that makes the play equivalent to life. Artzybashev is not bothered, as many a smaller playwright might have been bothered, by the fact that the first act is just a picture that might easily have been omitted, and thus have made the action more concentrated. What he gains by the contrast between the peaceful happy situation in the first act

and the havoc in the next three amply repays for the looseness in construction. Observe, too, the subtle use of the two characters, the consumptive Semyonov and the Prince, both of them weaklings in the first act, the one to be pitied for his physical disability, the other for his moral inferiority. In the next three acts the tables are turned. In the world left after the war has done its work and marked its impress upon its victims, Semyonov and the Prince become strong.

Of course, the militarist may say of this play what I have said before of *Sanine*. It exaggerates one side. The other side is not given a hearing. But this is a question about which millions see only one side, and for an artist to be of those millions does not condemn him for narrowness.

The following extracts from a short autobiographical sketch contain the essential facts of Artzybashev's career. The passage I quoted on *Sanine* is also taken from this sketch.

"I was born in the year 1878 in a small town in Southern Russia. By name and extraction I am Tartar, but not of pure descent, since there is Russian, French, Georgian, and Polish blood in my veins. There is one of my ancestors of whom I am proud, and that is the well-known Polish rebel leader Kosciuszko, my great-grandfather on the maternal side. My father was a small landowner, a retired officer; my mother died of consumption when I was three years old, bequeathing me a legacy of tuberculosis. I did not become seriously ill until 1907, but even before that the tuberculosis never left me in peace, as it manifested itself in various forms of illness.

"I went to a grammar-school in the provinces; but as I had taken the keenest interest in painting from my childhood, I left it at the age of sixteen

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and went to a school of art. I was very poor; I had to live in dirty garrets without enough to eat, and the worst of it all was that I had not enough money for my principal needs—paints and canvas. So it was not given to me to become an artist; to earn anything at all I was obliged to do caricatures and write short essays and humorous tales for all kinds of cheap papers.

“Quite by chance, in the year 1901, I wrote my first story, *Pasha Tumanov*. An actual occurrence and my own hatred for the superannuated schools suggested the subject. But the censorship at that time categorically forbade any statements to be made which did not show life in the schools in a pleasing light. Thus it was impossible for the story to achieve publicity at the right time, and it did not appear until some years later in book form. That has been the fate, moreover, of many of my things. In spite of this the story was not without favorable results for me; it attracted the attention of the editorial staff and stimulated me to further work. I renounced my dream of becoming an artist and transferred my allegiance to literature. This was very hard; even today I cannot see paintings without emotion. I love colors more than words.

“*Pasha Tumanov* was followed by two or three stories which interested the editor of a small review, a man named Miroljuboff. My first introduction to literary circles I owe to him. Up till then I had never been in editorial offices, but had always sent my tales by post. This was because I imagined them as temples consecrated to literature, which I revered. Nowadays we live in other times and have other customs in Russia; advertisement and influence dominate the literary world. However, Miroljuboff’s name will leave its mark on the history

of Russian literature, although he did not write himself.

"In the year 1905, during the bloody Revolution, much that I had written for purposes of agitation was confiscated. I myself was indicted, but the temporary success of the Revolution at the end of 1905 saved me from punishment.

"My development was very strongly influenced by Tolstoi, although I never shared his views on non-resistance to evil. As an artist he overpowered me, and I found it difficult not to model my work on his. Dostoevsky, and to a certain extent, Chekov, played almost as great a part, and Victor Hugo and Goethe were constantly before my eyes. These five names are those of my teachers and literary masters.

"It is often thought here that Nietzsche exercised a great influence over me. This surprises me, for the simple reason that I have never read Nietzsche. This brilliant thinker is out of sympathy with me, both in his ideas and in the bombastic form of his works, and I have never got beyond the beginnings of his books. Max Stirner is to me much nearer and more comprehensible."

THOMAS SELTZER.

WAR

A Play in Four Acts, translated from the Russian
of Michael Artzybashev by Thomas Seltzer

PERSONS OF THE PLAY

PIOTR IVANOVICH, a retired colonel.

OLGA PETROVNA, his wife.

VOLODYA, a student, their son.

NINA, their daughter.

VLADIMIR ALEKSANDROVICH, an officer, her husband.

ASYA, a young girl.

DAVE, a second lieutenant.

PRINCE VORONETSKY, a landowner.

SEMYONOV, a student.

SONYA and KOLYA, children of an officer killed in the
war.

SIDORENKO, an officer's servant.

KATYA, a maid.

A medical student, a Sister of Mercy, and soldiers.

*The action takes place in the house of PIOTR in the
Russia of today.*

WAR

BY MICHAEL ARTZYBASHEV

ACT I

It is a bright, sunny day in spring. The trees are in blossom in front of an old nobleman's house with columns and a terrace, and broad steps leading down to the garden. On the terrace is a large rush-bottom armchair, and on one side under a large tree a garden bench. In front of the house lies a circular plot of ground with early spring flowers. Beyond the trees is seen a railing and a wicket gate opening into a city street. OLGA PETROVNA, the mother, is at work in the flower patch, while PIOTR IVANOVICH, her husband, stands looking on, smoking. He is in a light uniform and is hatless.

OLGA. You had better put your cap on, Piotr. You'll catch cold.

PIOTR. Oh, no; I'm warm.

OLGA. Yes, warm. You think so. It's just the kind of weather one is apt to catch a cold in. I'll tell Katya to bring you your cap.

PIOTR. Don't; I don't want it.

OLGA. [*Not heeding him, she calls.*] Katya, Katya.

KATYA. [*Coming out on the terrace.*] What is it?

OLGA. Fetch your master's cap, and tell Aksinya to start a fire in the fireplace.

KATYA. Yes, ma'am. [*She goes out.*]

PIOTR. [*Looking at his watch.*] It's time for coffee. Will you finish soon?

OLGA. What time is it?

PIOTR. Half past twelve—time long ago.

OLGA. I'll be through in a moment. I must tell Sidorenko to water the flowers every evening. He never does a stroke of work, anyway—just runs after Katya the whole day.

KATYA. [*As she glides quickly down the steps.*] Here's your cap, Master.

OLGA. Is Vladimir Aleksandrovich up yet?

KATYA. Yes, he is; he's washing. Shall I get the coffee ready?

OLGA. Yes, yes. Take a clean tablecloth from the sideboard. And be careful not to soil it at once the way you always do. I can never keep a large enough supply of tablecloths.

KATYA. All right, ma'am; I'll be careful. [*She goes into the house.*]

PIOTR. [*Pulling his cap down on his head with an air of gravity.*] I don't remember a spring like this for ever so long. Last year at this time it was still quite cold.

OLGA. You just imagine it, Piotr. Last year was warm too. It's the month of May, thank God!

PIOTR. I remember distinctly wearing an overcoat when I went out on the tenth of May.

OLGA. You don't remember any such thing. It's your imagination, nothing else, I assure you.

PIOTR. [*Heatedly.*] But I remember it distinctly. [*After a pause.*] But I never saw a spring like the one in the year 1877, when we crossed the frontier.

OLGA. [*Without heeding him.*] I haven't planted any resedas this year.

PIOTR. When we arrived at the Danube—

OLGA. Here is Nina. Why are you dressed so lightly, Ninochka? I'll tell Vladimir on you.

NINA. [*In a light summer dress, she comes out on the terrace and sits down on the top step.*] All right, Mamma; tell him.—What were you talking about so animatedly, Papa?

PIOTR. I was saying that in 1877, when we crossed the frontier—

OLGA. [*Annoyed.*] We've heard all that before, Piotr.

PIOTR. [*With heat.*] Why, I declare! Nina asked me a question, and so I answered her. Why, why—

NINA. [*Smiling quietly.*] Papa, isn't it time for you to take your coffee?

PIOTR. [*Instantly forgetting the dispute.*] Yes, high time. But you can't tear your mother away from her flowers!

OLGA. One moment, one moment!

PIOTR. I know your "one moment." Nina, has Vladimir come yet?

NINA. He'll be here presently.

PIOTR. Well, Olga.

OLGA. You go, go. I'll be coming soon.

PIOTR. [*Good-naturedly, rubbing his hands and walking into the house.*] Nina, make her come in soon, or she'll be at it the rest of the day. [*He goes into the house.*]

[*There is silence as OLGA potters over the flowers, passing from one side of the plot to the other. NINA, sitting on the terrace, looks around with a bright, contemplative expression.*]

NINA. I woke up today thinking that in a short time I shall have been married three years. How strange!

OLGA. Why strange?

NINA. I don't know. When I first met Vladimir I didn't like him at all, and if somebody had told me I was going to marry him I'd just have laughed.

OLGA. It's always like that.

NINA. [*After a silence.*] I had just been graduated from college, and my head was all awlirl with the expectation of something unusual. Prince Voronetsky was courting me, and I almost fell in love with him. In fact, I *was* a little in love with him. Suddenly I stopped caring for the Prince and began to feel that Vladimir was the best and dearest of men. How stupid I was then, so afraid people would find out that Vladimir and I had kissed. I thought that the discovery of our kissing would result in some fearful disaster. But then it did come out, and there was nothing terrible about it, and everybody was glad. [*After a silence.*] But that was a great time. [*Sadly.*] It seems to me nothing like it will ever come into my life again.

OLGA. [*In a philosophical tone.*] It was good, and it will be better still.

NINA. No; nothing like it again for me. It was something—like a fairy tale, like a dream. I sometimes think there will never again be such nights, with such a moon; that there cannot possibly be such nights again. I am happy, and yet it's sad to think that the best is all behind me and can never return.

OLGA. How do you know, Ninochka?

NINA. [*Surprised.*] But I can't be Vladimir's sweetheart again.

OLGA. [*Slyly.*] Why just Vladimir's?

NINA. [*Looking at her in amazement, with sudden embarrassment.*] Mamma, what are you talking about? It's ugly! I don't like it.

OLGA. [*Amused at her embarrassment.*] Why ugly? Lots of things happen in the world. Sup-

pose a war is suddenly declared and Vladimir is killed—Heaven forbid! Then you'll marry again.

NINA. No, never. Even if Vladimir were killed, I would never marry again.

OLGA. That's what they all say, Ninochka; but all the same, when it comes to it, they do marry again and bear children.

NINA. I think it's disgusting. How can a woman ever forget what has been, especially if the man she loved was killed? Why, it's shocking.

OLGA. Of course it's shocking. But what is one to do? Bury oneself in a monastery? You cry and cry—and then you forget. One must live some way.

NINA. I don't see why it's so absolutely necessary. And then, even if I should marry again, I should feel miserable, awkward, and disgusted.

OLGA. It only seems so to you now, Ninochka.

NINA. No, it doesn't only seem so; I know it. How can one experience something like it a second time? No matter how much I loved my second husband, I'd always be remembering and comparing! No; it's ugly.

OLGA. There is nothing ugly in it.

NINA. It is ugly. Anyway, I think it would be far better to fall in love and then die, than to have to return again to a prosaic, dull, ordinary existence.

OLGA. If that's the way you take it, then life isn't worth living.

NINA. Perhaps it really isn't.

OLGA. And yet here have we been living together, your father and I, and have both grown old, and still we have no desire to die.

NINA. Oh, you; that's quite a different matter.

OLGA. You only think it's different.

NINA. Think? What do you mean?

OLGA. Exactly what I say. You imagine it's different, but it isn't. It's because you have no children. When you have children, you'll settle down at once.

NINA. [*Blushing.*] I shall never have children.

OLGA. And, pray, why not?

NINA. Because—because I don't like children.

OLGA. You don't like them because you haven't got them. When I was young, I, too, thought I didn't like children; but when I lost my Sandy, I nearly went crazy.

[*A silence ensues.*]

NINA. Still, it's all very sad.

OLGA. Sad, sad!—You had better put some more clothes on, or you'll catch cold.

NINA. Now, Mother! how can one catch cold in such weather?

OLGA. [*Insistently.*] This is just the kind of weather one is apt to catch cold in.

KATYA. [*Appearing on the steps.*] The master is calling you.

OLGA. I am coming; I am coming. [*She straightens herself, shakes her hands, smoothes down her gray hair, and goes quickly into the house.*] Really, Ninochka, you had better put something on. I'll have Katya get you a jacket. Yes? Shall I?

NINA. Why, Mamma, upon my word!

OLGA. See here, Nina, you'll catch cold, and then you'll be coughing like Senya Semyonov. [*She goes out, accompanied by KATYA.*]

NINA. [*Sitting alone on the steps, all bathed in the sun, she smiles gently and brightly at some thought that passes through her mind.*] Oh, how good!

[She folds her hands behind her head, stretches her supple body languidly, looks once more into the blossoming garden, and walks slowly into the house.]

It is quiet. The sun is shining. Somewhere in the garden, the sparrows chirp roguishly. ASYA KACHALOVA and SEMYONOV appear at the gate, ASYA in a light dress and with a light sunshade in her hand, SEMYONOV in a student's coat buttoned to the chin, notwithstanding the warm weather, and with a stout, crooked cane hanging from a button. He carries ASYA's book in his hands.]

SEMYONOV. Volodya is still in bed asleep, I suppose.

ASYA. Why, it's one o'clock already.

SEMYONOV. What does he care? Go in and see. I'll wait here. If I go in, Piotr Ivanovich will begin to tell me about the war of seventy-seven again.

ASYA. *[Laughing.]* All right. Sit down. I'll be back soon. *[She goes lightly and rapidly up the steps into the house.]*

SEMYONOV. *[He is homely and thin, and his face is drawn by suffering. He sits down on the bench under the tree, and coughs drily.]* Yes, friend; that's the way. *[He beats the tip of his shoe lightly with his cane.]* It's a rotten deal I am getting, though—yes, a rotten deal. *[He whistles quietly, tapping the ground with his cane, and hanging his head.]* VLADIMIR ALEKSANDROVICH, back from the drill, enters from the street.]

VLADIMIR. Ah, Semyon Nikolayevich! How do you do? All alone here! Where are the others?

SEMYONOV. I don't know. I've just come.

VLADIMIR. Why don't you come in, then? They're having coffee, I suppose.

SEMYONOV. No, thanks; I'd rather stay here. I am bored to death by the war of 1877.

VLADIMIR. [*Laughing.*] Well, well! I didn't know Piotr Ivanovich had made you his victim too.

SEMYONOV. [*With an expression of horror.*] I tell you, it's frightful. Whew!

VLADIMIR. Piotr Ivanovich is an eccentric. Very well, then, if you wish to stay here, I'll send Volodya to keep you company. [*As he goes into the house, he calls.*] Sidorenko!

[SEMYONOV whistles quietly and taps his cane.]

ASYA. [*She comes out on the terrace, beaming with joy.*] Why, Volodya has really just got up. What a lazy fellow!

SEMYONOV. [*Bitterly.*] He's a darling!

ASYA. [*Turning a quick glance upon him.*] You are bad, Senya.

SEMYONOV. Not at all. It only hurts me to see you so much in love.

ASYA. [*Bursting out.*] What makes you think that?

SEMYONOV. When a woman goes off into raptures even over a man's sleeping till one o'clock in the afternoon, then it's very bad indeed. In my opinion, it's plain dissipation, nothing else.

ASYA. [*Pouting, and going into the garden.*] You are jealous because other people are in good health and you—

SEMYONOV. [*Bitterly.*] That's cruel, Aleksandra Ivanovna.

ASYA. [*Flinging herself towards him, penitently.*] Forgive me, Senya. I did not mean to offend you. Don't be angry.

SEMYONOV. [*Without looking at her.*] I am not angry. What right have I to be angry? You are perfectly right. It is jealousy—though no wonder it makes a man jealous to see everybody and every-

thing around him blooming, rejoicing, making love, and himself dying.

ASYA. Senya, don't talk that way. You mustn't.

SEMYONOV. Why? It's true. I am dying; that's all there is to it. [ASYA looks at him with pity, at a loss what to say.]

SEMYONOV. [Without looking at her, and tapping his cane as before.] Yes, such is the law of nature, and there is nothing to be done. As a matter of fact, it is all quite natural, quite in conformity with the purpose of nature. Only it's a damn shame that Nature in following out her purpose should have just fixed upon me; the devil take it! However, someone has got to die—if not I, then someone else. And I shouldn't gain so very much if I were to live twenty years more.

ASYA. Why are you so bitter against life, Senya?

SEMYONOV. What has life given me, Asya? If I were as strong as your Volodya, and if I were loved by a girl like you, then I too would sing hosannahs. But, as it is, it isn't worth while, upon my word! [With an unnatural smile.] Fall in love with me, Asya, yes?

ASYA. What nonsense! [In her embarrassment, she begins to draw circles around her with her sunshade.]

SEMYONOV. For you, it's nonsense; but for me—

ASYA. And for you, too, it's nonsense.

SEMYONOV. Not quite. In your relations to Volodya, I—

ASYA. [Interrupting him.] First of all, what has that got to do with you?

SEMYONOV. [With a bitter smile.] Absolutely nothing. [After a silence.] And yet it's all extremely unjust.

ASYA. What is?

SEMYONOV. Everything. Why are things given to one and taken away from another? Here is Volodya, and here am I. He has an iron constitution, health, and love. He has life before him, and he has the joy of living. Like all people in good health, he is happy just to be alive. And I have nothing except tuberculosis and the prospect of dying a perhaps painful death in the near future.

ASYA. Again, Senya!

SEMYONOV. It's a fact, Aleksandra Ivanovna. You can't get away from it. In my opinion, it would be fairer by far if you loved, not Volodya, but me.

ASYA. Again! Aren't you sick of it, Senya?

SEMYONOV. I am—I've been so for a long time—and yet—[*In an unnatural, ironical tone.*] It would really be much more poetical if, instead of loving Volodya, you would cheer and beautify the last days of my life. This way, what is it? You will marry, bear children—

ASYA. You are talking nonsense, Mr. Semyonov, and are insolent besides.

SEMYONOV. [*Sadly.*] I know it! Forgive me, Asya; I really feel very ill.

ASYA. [*Softening at once.*] I am not angry, but you mustn't speak about it.

[*There is a silence. ASYA bends over towards the flowers and smells them. SEMYONOV looks at her, and, as he looks, his face gradually assumes an angry expression.*]

SEMYONOV. [*With a sinister smile.*] But my, how desperately in love you are, Asya!

ASYA. [*Quickly drawing herself up.*] This is getting to be an intolerable nuisance, really.

SEMYONOV. [*Laughing maliciously.*] I am a fool. Why should I have asked your pardon? What for? You are in love; you enjoy life; you are happy.

But why should I respect your happiness? Why should I be glad of it? [*Rising and flourishing his cane.*] I spit upon your happiness and upon your love; I have a right not only to refuse to respect your love; I have a right to be jealous of you, to hate, despise, ridicule you—anything I please. You happy people should be thankful to us unhappy ones that we tolerate your happiness.—All right; live, enjoy yourselves, love each other, think that the whole world was created for nothing but your pleasure, be fruitful and multiply, and—be damned! Goodby! [*He turns abruptly and goes out of the garden. ASYA looks after him, frightened and surprised. VOLODYA comes in.*]

VOLODYA. [*On the terrace.*] Semyonov, where are you going? Hello, Asya. [*He runs down to her and presses her hand hard.*] Semyonov!

SEMYONOV. [*Turning around for a moment, bitterly.*] Go to the devil!

[*He goes out. A silence ensues.*]

VOLODYA. What's the matter? What's happened?

ASYA. [*Embarrassed.*] I don't know, really. He is so queer.

VOLODYA. Yes; isn't it a pity? His sickness has soured him. Oh, well, it's nothing,—a momentary fit. He gets attacks like that now and then, but he is a fine fellow at bottom. [*He takes ASYA's hand.*] How well you look today, Asya!

ASYA. [*Laughing.*] You tell me the same thing every day.

VOLODYA. [*Taking her other hand also.*] Don't you like it? Don't you? [*Bending his head and looking into her eyes.*] Don't you like it, Asya? [*KATYA comes out on the terrace and shakes the tablecloth.*]

VOLODYA. [*Letting go of ASYA's hands and looking at KATYA; in an unnatural tone of voice.*] Have you been to the library today?

ASYA. [*Confused.*] Yes, I got you— [*Frightened.*] He carried off my books.

VOLODYA. Who?

ASYA. Senya. I got the novels for you, but he has taken them away.

[*KATYA goes out.*]

VOLODYA. Never mind; he'll bring them back. Come into the garden, Asya.

ASYA. [*With a shy look.*] What for?

VOLODYA. Just for a little stroll.

ASYA. [*Shyly shaking her head and closing her eyes.*]

VOLODYA. Why not?

ASYA. [*Suddenly lowering her eyes, in an undertone.*] You'll begin to speak about that again.

VOLODYA. About what? [*He takes her hand.*] About what, Asya?

ASYA. [*Making a slight effort to pull her hand away.*] Why, about that . . .

VOLODYA. What's the use of talking? Don't I love you, Asya?

ASYA. Is that love?

VOLODYA. [*Passionately.*] Yes, of course. You are a woman, Asya. Why shouldn't I speak? Anyway, it's got to come sooner or later.

ASYA. [*Lowering her eyes.*] No, it never will.

VOLODYA. Yes, it will! It will! [*He seizes her hand in a tight pressure and draws her to him.*] Asya!

ASYA. Volodya, Volodya, you have gone out of your mind!

[SIDORENKO enters from the garden with a watering-can in his hand; they fly apart.]

VOLODYA. [*Confused.*] What do you want?

SIDORENKO. [*Frightened.*] Nothing, Mr. Volodya. I—I was going to water the flowers.

VOLODYA. You'll do it some other time. Vladimir Aleksandrovich wants you.

SIDORENKO. Yes, sir. [*He sets the can near the flowers and slowly passes into the house.*]

ASYA. [*In a low voice.*] Let's go away somewhere, Volodya.

VOLODYA. [*Stily.*] Where to?

ASYA. [*Blushing and smiling, and looking at him with bright, loving eyes.*] Well, into the garden, if you please; it's all the same.

VOLODYA. [*Rapturously.*] My dear girl, my sweetheart!

ASYA. Only please, Volodya, not like yesterday. . . . You mustn't . . .

VOLODYA. Why mustn't I?

ASYA. You mustn't, and that's all. It's bad.

[VOLODYA suddenly flings his arms around her and kisses her.]

ASYA. [*Struggling to free herself and frightened.*] Volodya, Volodya! You are mad. Let me go! [*For a moment she remains still, abandoning herself to his kisses, then tears herself away, looks at him with happy, mist-covered eyes, and runs into the garden, VOLODYA following her.*]

The stage is empty. SIDORENKO comes out of the house, takes the can, yawns, crosses to the other side, and goes out. NINA and VLADIMIR enter.]

NINA. Where are our young people?

VLADIMIR. I don't know. They were here a few minutes ago. They must have gone into the garden.

NINA. [*Sitting down on the top step.*] I feel so happy today. Maybe it's because the sun is so bright.

VLADIMIR. [*Seating himself next to her on the wide stone balustrade.*] And maybe it's because I love you. [*He takes her hand, kisses it, and puts it on his knee.*] My dear, sweet Nina!

NINA. [*Laughing.*] We are all dear and sweet.

VLADIMIR. [*After a short silence, stroking her hand.*] It's good to be living in the world, after all.

NINA. [*Thoughtfully.*] Sometimes too good, even.

VLADIMIR. Why too good?

NINA. Because—it's awful.

VLADIMIR. Awful?

NINA. Yes, awful! Nothing is lasting. We know that things cannot continue the same forever.

VLADIMIR. [*Catching her thought.*] Oh!

NINA. [*Seizing his hand and looking at him wide-eyed.*] So that when you know that your happiness will not last forever, and that after happiness must come sorrow, you begin to feel so awful, awful!

VLADIMIR. Why think about it, Nina?

NINA. I don't know; it runs in my head. I am very, very happy, Vladimir.

VLADIMIR. [*Bending down and kissing her fingers.*] You are bored, darling. You know, I sometimes think that I am committing a crime by living with you.

NINA. What are you talking about?

VLADIMIR. Really, you see, I am such a simple, uninteresting fellow, I must bore you. You should have had a different kind of husband.

NINA. [*Putting her hand over his lips.*] Don't talk nonsense.

VLADIMIR. [*Kissing her hand and gently pulling it away.*] No, Nina; I'm not joking. Who am I? An ordinary, humdrum army officer, that's all, whereas you are a fine, clever, beautiful, unusual woman. You should have had a talented, educated, rich man for a husband, and you ought to live in a large city, meet lots of people, and shine in society. Why didn't you marry the Prince, Nina?

NINA. [*Laughing.*] Because I married you. That's all.

VLADIMIR. [*A little jealous.*] He is much more of your sort than I am.

NINA. Vladimir, I'll get angry.

VLADIMIR. I won't any more; I won't. [*After a brief silence.*] Oh, it will be all right. Next fall I'll pass the examinations for the Academy, and then we'll move to St. Petersburg. Our whole life is still before us; isn't it, my little Nina?

NINA. Of course it is, dear.

VLADIMIR. [*Kissing her hand.*] My dear, precious Nina. We are still going to enjoy life. One must have faith, and work; that's all. You know, Nina, when I look at you, it seems to me that the sun shines only because you are here— [*Looking around.*] I hear someone coming.

[PRINCE VORONETSKY and SECOND LIEUTENANT DAUE come in through the wicket gate.]

VLADIMIR. [*In involuntary excitement.*] The prince again!

NINA. [*In a hurried voice.*] Never mind. I'll say I am not feeling well.

VLADIMIR. [*Trying to conceal his excitement.*] No, don't. Why should you? [*Rising to meet the guests.*] How do you do, Prince! How are you,

Daue! Is this a social call, or have you come on business?

DAUE. I am just coming from the office. Maksimyeh asked me to bring this to you. [*He hands him a paper.*] Good afternoon, Nina Petrovna. [*He kisses her hand.*] I've brought you a dandy piece of music. We'll play it together. [*The Prince silently kisses NINA's hand and salutes VLADIMIR ALEKSANDROVICH.*]

VLADIMIR. [*Rapidly glancing over the paper.*] Daue, will you step into my room a moment? I'd like to talk to you. Prince, you'll excuse us, won't you?

PRINCE. Certainly.

VLADIMIR. We'll be back soon, Nina. Come, Daue.

[*VLADIMIR and DAUE go into the house. During a silence NINA remains sitting, with a listless, indifferent air, and with her eyes turned away from the prince.*]

PRINCE. [*With a smirk.*] You seem to be angry with me, Nina Petrovna?

NINA. [*Coldly.*] I am not angry. I feel queer; that's all. I thought it was all at an end.

PRINCE. [*His face darkening.*] But if I can't?

NINA. [*Coldly, shrugging her shoulders.*] I don't know. It's your affair. But if you really love me as you say, then you ought to spare me; you ought to leave me alone.

PRINCE. [*Quickly.*] So my presence excites you?

NINA. Not in the sense that you mean. It's simply unpleasant.

PRINCE. To whom? To you or to your husband?

NINA. [*Haughtily.*] Please leave my husband out of it. What has my husband got to do with it? It's very disagreeable to me.

PRINCE. But why? Do tell me why?

NINA. [*Excitedly pulling at her handkerchief and not looking at him.*] You ought to understand, Prince. I respect you, hold you in high esteem as a man. But really it's time at last that you realized that it's exceedingly unpleasant to me [*She grows irritated.*—these constant explanations, your dogged pursuit of me. It's all very tiresome and difficult, really.

PRINCE. [*Sadly, twirling his moustache and looking sidewise at her.*] It's your own fault, Nina Petrovna.

NINA. [*In surprise.*] My fault? That's strange.

PRINCE. Yes, yours. Whose fault is it that no other woman exists for me besides you, that I think only of you, see only you? If your voice, your walk, the scent of your perfumes, even the rustle of your dress turn my head and drive me crazy, whose fault is it? Who did it?

NINA. I don't know. I certainly had no intention of doing it.

PRINCE. [*Bitterly.*] It isn't true.

NINA. [*Offended.*] Prince!

PRINCE. Yes, it's not true. You are not really what you can make yourself seem to be. You are just an ordinary woman, but you have acquired the art of seeming to be very different. Your hair lies on your head as on no other woman's, your walk excites, and your dress seems part of yourself, so that you produce the impression of being altogether out of the ordinary, a woman of rare beauty. But tell me frankly, when you stand for hours in front of the mirror, when you stretch and massage and coddle your body, when you move, laugh, or dance, do you do it quite naturally, quite unconsciously, with absolutely no design?

NINA. [*Confused.*] An odd question! You've gone out of your mind, Prince.

PRINCE. Maybe. I sometimes think so myself.

[*A silence ensues.*]

NINA. [*Agitated, without looking at him.*] Perhaps you are right. [*The Prince utters a short, queer chuckle. NINA gives him a quick, almost frightened look.*] All right, if you insist; it's partly my own fault. I shouldn't have allowed it to come to this. I have enough sense not to be insulted at being told the truth, and enough courage to admit it. There once was a time when I tried to please you.

PRINCE. [*Sarcastically.*] Once?

NINA. [*Greatly agitated.*] Well, yes, and afterwards, too, I didn't always act as I should have. But, after all, I am only a woman,—just an ordinary woman, as you say. I am to blame,—but now it's all at an end.

PRINCE. [*Somberly.*] It cannot end this way, Nina Petrovna.

NINA. [*In distress.*] But understand me, for heaven's sake!—I don't want to—You are torturing me.—I love my husband!

PRINCE. [*Obstinately.*] What do I care about that?

NINA. But I implore you! [*In sudden anger.*] But what do you mean by this? Can you force me? I have a right to demand that you let me alone.

PRINCE. This is a question about which I could say a lot to you, Nina Petrovna. But your people are coming. Another time.

[*Both are silent. VLADIMIR and DAUE walk down from the terrace.*]

VLADIMIR. So your mind is quite made up?

DAUE. Oh, yes; I'll leave the regiment in August and enter the Conservatory next fall.

VLADIMIR. We'll meet in St. Petersburg, then.

DAUE. You'll be in the Academy?

VLADIMIR. I hope so. [*Walking up to NINA and the Prince.*] Here we are again.

DAUE. [*Gleefully.*] Well, Nina Petrovna, shall we play that piece now?

NINA. [*Distracted, not having yet completely regained her composure.*] What piece?—Oh, yes—of course we'll play it.

DAUE. I brought the music with me, too. [*With animation.*] I am very anxious to play it for you. It's so bright and sunny.

PRINCE. [*Glumly.*] Daue seems to be in love with Nina Petrovna.

DAUE. [*With quiet ease.*] Oh, no. If I am in love with anything it's with music.

PRINCE. Get out! I don't believe you.

DAUE. Upon my word! You know, I often wonder how one can fall in love with women, suffer, and plague one's self on account of them, when there is music in the world. To my mind, the most beautiful woman in existence is not worth a single Beethoven sonata.

VLADIMIR. It seems to me that the whole world and all that is in it is not worth as much to you as that Beethoven sonata. How did you ever come to be an officer, Daue?

DAUE. I have always thought it strange myself. You see, I never dared to dream that I could be a real musician. I thought a real musician was something quite out of the ordinary. I had to choose an ordinary occupation. My father was a soldier; so I became a soldier, too. But I am going to leave now. My mind is positively made up. I'll devote

myself entirely to music, and I think I can still turn out to be something. [*He looks round, smiling in embarrassment.*]

VLADIMIR. I have no doubt of it.

DAUE. [*A-quiver with impatience.*] Well, Nina Petrovna?

NINA. I am ready.—You stay here and listen.

VLADIMIR. All right. Will you have a cigarette, Prince?

[*NINA and DAUE go into the house.*]

VLADIMIR. [*Lighting a cigarette.*] He is a remarkable man, Daue. Nothing exists for him outside of music.

PRINCE. [*Mechanically, thinking of something else.*] Yes—he is a talented chap.

VLADIMIR. When there was talk of war last year, Daue was in despair. It was distressing to see him. And it wasn't because he is a coward, but because for him to give up his violin is like giving up his life. [*Musing.*] But every one of us has something he holds especially dear.

[*There is a pause. The tuning of a violin and the sounds of a piano along with the tuning are heard coming from the house.*]

VLADIMIR. Yes, every one has something which he values above everything else. And yet, let something happen suddenly, and we'd all drop what's dearest to us and go out to kill and die. Come to think of it, it's queer, isn't it? But we'd do it, nevertheless; yes, we'd go. The first one to do it would be Daue. He'd drop his violin and go with the rest.

PRINCE. [*Mechanically.*] Yes, it's so, of course.

[*OLGA and PIOTR come out on the balcony.*]

OLGA. The Prince is here, too. Good afternoon. Ninochka and Daue will give us some music. Let's listen.

PIOTR. [*With an air of lively satisfaction.*] I like to hear them play very much. I always listen to them with great pleasure. Daue is a genuine musician. In our regiment there was an officer who—

OLGA. [*Sitting down on the stoop.*] Hush, Piotr. Listen.

[DAUE plays a bright, cheerful melody on the violin, accompanied by NINA. All listen. OLGA nods her head in time with the music. VLADIMIR smiles with satisfaction. But the Prince listens with an expression of pain on his face. ASYA and VOLODYA come in at the sound of the music. They greet the Prince from a distance, and stop short.]

PIOTR. Wonderful. What is it?

OLGA. [*Annoyed, motioning him to keep quiet.*] Sh-sh, Piotr; don't talk.

[*The music rises to a high, joyous note and stops.*]

ALL. Bravo! Bravo, Daue! Encore! [*There is general animation. ASYA and VOLODYA cross over to the others.*]

ASYA. What a beautiful piece! What is it? I've never heard it before. It's exquisite! Once more, once more. [*She runs into the house.*] Play it again, please, Nina Petrovna.

OLGA. [*Reproachfully.*] Again you have come out without your cap, Piotr.

PIOTR. For heaven's sake! Let me alone, please. Do me the favor, won't you?

OLGA. A favor, yes. And if you catch cold, who will look after you?

[PIOTR IVANOVICH throws up his hands in despair. All laugh.]

VLADIMIR. I didn't know Asya was here. She is a dear girl. Nina is very fond of her, too.

OLGA. Everybody likes her.

VLADIMIR. [*With a twinkle in his eyes.*] And Volodya more than anybody else.

OLGA. Thank God for that. We'll marry them, and then we'll all live together even more nicely than before. We must marry off the Prince, too. You ought to find yourself a nice, good girl, Prince, and marry; and then you and your wife would be coming to see us and have tea with us, and all would be just right. It would be so nice.

PRINCE. [*With a scarcely perceptible touch of irony.*] I am afraid it would turn out to be too nice.

[DAVE plays again. All are silent.]

CURTAIN

ACT II

The time is some weeks later.

It is the dining-room in the house of PIOTR. The table is spread for a farewell breakfast. A door on the right leads to the hallway in which SIDORENKO is tying up trunks. The bell rings. SIDORENKO opens the door, admitting ASYA and SEMYONOV. ASYA takes off her hat, SEMYONOV hangs up his overcoat, and both enter the dining-room.

ASYA. Nobody in. We had better wait here, Senya. I suppose they are not thinking about us now. They have enough to occupy them.

SEMYONOV. All right, let's wait. [*He sits down at the window and lights a cigarette.*]

ASYA. You are smoking again, Senya? It's bad for you.

SEMYONOV. It's all the same. I'll die if I smoke, and I'll die if I don't. I won't last much longer, whatever I do.

[*ASYA nervously paces the room, smoothing down a folded corner of the tablecloth, and gazing through the window.*]

SEMYONOV. Why are you so nervous, Asya?

ASYA. I don't know. I can't get it into my head. It's all so unexpected.

SEMYONOV. Unexpected? Hardly. On the contrary, it was to be expected long ago. Do you think the Germans have been preparing for war these forty years for their own private satisfaction, eh?

ASYA. I didn't mean it that way. You could have told it was coming, I suppose; you know about such things; but for me it would have been unexpected, no matter when it came. I can't imagine how people can make up their minds to such a horror. The misery and tears it has brought into almost every home! In the whole city there isn't one who hasn't some relative or dear friend to take leave of. The soldiers are so jolly, and they sing as they go. Even the officers look as though they are glad. But my heart contracts when I think of the many of them that are doomed to death and to terrible agony and suffering. And yet you know, Senya, I don't feel so sorry for those who go to the front as for those who are left behind. Why, it's terrible to see your near and dear ones off to the war. How many of them will never return! Yet every one has a mother, a wife, children. What must they be feeling now! What will they be thinking all the time! How many tears they will weep!—No; it's terrible, terrible! It's easier to die oneself.

SEMYONOV. For some it is; for some it isn't. It all depends.

[*There is a silence.*]

ASYA. Poor Nina! Poor Vladimir! And how he looked forward to entering the Academy next fall and going to St. Petersburg and beginning a new life! Nina cries and cries all the time; she never stops.

SEMYONOV. Yes, it's a bad business. Take care that you don't have to weep, too.

ASYA. [*Stopping short, frightened.*] I? What for?

SEMYONOV. Volodya might go off to the war, and then you'll be left behind, a straw widow.

ASYA. Volodya isn't in the army.

SEMYONOV. He'll go as a volunteer. He is a strong, healthy chap. All are going. Why shouldn't he?

ASYA. You are not going?

SEMYONOV. I? I, too? The trouble is, I'd never get farther than the first hospital. So it's hardly worth while— But why are you so frightened?

ASYA. [*Confused.*] It's impossible. You are saying it just to frighten me.

SEMYONOV. Not a bit of it. He told me so himself, yesterday. And I think it would be a fine thing for him to do. Why, even Daue is going.

ASYA. [*Impatiently.*] What do I care about Daue?

SEMYONOV. [*Spitefully.*] There you are. You are all heroines until it strikes home. It's Daue, and none but Daue, that I am sorry for. He is worth all the Volodyas in the world put together. If Daue is killed, it would be a genuine loss.

ASYA. And for the others you are not sorry?

SEMYONOV. For some I am; for others I am not. For your Volodya, for example, I am not. Upon my word, I'm not.

ASYA. [*Indignantly.*] Aren't you ashamed, Senya?

SEMYONOV. Why should I be? It is only to you that he is so precious. But for humanity to be minus one Volodya is really no great loss.

ASYA. Why, he is your friend.

SEMYONOV. [*Darkly.*] I have no friends.

ASYA. So much the worse for you.

SEMYONOV. Perhaps. But try to look at it objectively. All right; Volodya remains at home, goes through the university, becomes an instructor in

mathematics, marries you, begets children. What boredom? Is it worth being born into the world for that?

ASYA. But to be killed or crippled in war, it is?

SEMYONOV. One may get run over by a motor or trolley. War at least is life, fight. I'd honestly advise him to go.

ASYA. [*Her whole body trembles, as she fixes him with a look of hatred.*] Yes, I know; it's you who put the idea into his head, you who advised him to go. It was an ugly, mean thing to do.

SEMYONOV. Why was it mean? Is it mean to advise a man to go and defend his country?

ASYA. [*Embarrassed.*] I didn't mean that—And you— [*She suddenly covers her face with her hands, and goes towards the door.*]

SEMYONOV. Asya, don't run away. [*ASYA pays no attention to him, and goes out.*] Well, as you please. [*He shrugs his shoulders and absent-mindedly pokes his already extinguished cigarette into the ash-tray.*] Yes, yes; that's the way.—And you, Sidorenko, you are going, too?

SIDORENKO. Yes, sir.

SEMYONOV. Aren't you afraid?

SIDORENKO. [*Smiling.*] Of course I am. It's no joke. But I am sorry more for her as is left at home.

SEMYONOV. At home? What home?

SIDORENKO. My home, sir, of course. I have a wife, living in the village, and of course she is a foolish woman, and she cries and carries on. Naturally, I feel sorry. But, just the same, maybe it's all right. We'll get back all right, if God means us to. Perhaps it looks so awful only from a distance. [*He slams the trunk lid shut and carries it over to one side. The bell rings and SIDORENKO opens the door.*]

DAUE enters, in a field uniform, carrying a violin case in his hand. He crosses into the dining-room.]

DAUE. Good morning, Semyon Nikolayevich. You have come to say good-by to us, too? [*Holding out his hand to him.*] That's fine. I thought I shouldn't have a chance to see you again before I left.

SEMYONOV. So you are going?

DAUE. [*Laying the violin case on the table, with a slight gesture of his hands.*] What's to be done? It's got to be.

SEMYONOV. But you were going to leave the army, weren't you?

DAUE. Oh, yes, I was. It's too late now, though. Fate has decreed otherwise, it seems. [*He laughs.*] "Written in the Book of Life," I suppose; or is it in the Book of Death?—Besides, I'd feel ashamed—everybody going, and I staying here and scraping on the violin. No; if we are to die, then let's die together.

SEMYONOV. And how about your music?

DAUE. [*With a sigh.*] Yes, I guess I shall have to give it up. Here is my violin. I've brought it here to ask Nina Petrovna to keep it for me. It's a fine violin, very expensive. Maybe I won't get killed, after all.

SEMYONOV. You won't; I am sure of it.

DAUE. We shall see. And if they do kill me—well, what of it? There'll be one poor fiddler the less in the world. One must die some time, anyway. I'd only like to make sure about the violin. It would be a pity to lose it.

SEMYONOV. Don't worry about the violin. It will be taken good care of here.

DAUE. Thank you. I rely on Nina Petrovna. She loves music herself, and she has always treated me well.

[VLADIMIR comes in, also in field uniform, looking sad and preoccupied. He forgets that he has not yet seen SEMYONOV, and greets only DAUE.]

VLADIMIR. Good morning, Daue. Well?—I sent for you, but you weren't at home.

DAUE. I have been running about the city the whole morning, trying to get my affairs in order. Thank God, it's all settled now. I sold my piano to Kokhanovsky. The only thing left is the violin.

VLADIMIR. [*Absent-mindedly*]. Oh, the violin. [*He puts out his hand towards the violin, but the next moment forgets about it.*] What a crowd there was in the church today!

SEMYONOV. Good morning, Vladimir Aleksandro-vich.

VLADIMIR. Oh, excuse me; I didn't see you. Glad to see you! Thanks very much for coming. [*Recollecting himself.*] But why don't you come into the next room, gentlemen? They are all in there—the Prince is here.

DAUE. The Prince has come, too?

VLADIMIR. [*With an exaggerated air of indifference.*] Yes; he has come to see us off. Come, gentlemen. [*Smiling faintly.*] I see you are holding on to your violin and won't let go of it.

DAUE. I want to ask Nina to put it away for me in some safe place. It's a very good one, and very expensive, you know. It would be a pity if something should happen to it.

VLADIMIR. [*Without hearing what he said.*] Yes, it's a pity. Well, then, come in. [*He turns round abruptly, and goes out without waiting for them.* SEMYONOV and DAUE go out after him. There is a pause. KATYA enters, and sets the table with beer

and wine. ASYA and VOLODYA come in quickly. On seeing KATYA, they stop short.]

VOLODYA. Please leave the room for a moment, Katya.

KATYA. Yes, sir. [*She goes out through the ante-chamber, whispering something to SIDORENKO on the way, and SIDORENKO passes out after her.*]

VOLODYA. [*Following them with his eyes until they are gone.*] I have been meaning to have a talk with you now for some time. Of course you, as a woman, can't understand it, but, upon my word, a fellow feels sort of ashamed to stay at home when all are going.

ASYA. [*Suppressing her tears.*] But not all are going. There is Senya. He remains behind, and so does the Prince.

VOLODYA. Senya! Senya is a sick man. And as for the Prince, he is a well-fed animal who has had a disappointment in love and hugs his tragedy, which is dearer to him than the whole world. Asya, you won't keep me from doing what I feel I ought to do, will you?

ASYA. [*Through her tears.*] How can I keep you?

VOLODYA. [*Frightened.*] Now there! What are you crying about, Asya? Dear me! Look at you now! Why, it isn't settled yet! It's by no means certain that I am going. Maybe I won't go. So far it's nothing but an idea.

ASYA. [*Incredulously.*] You are only saying that to cheer me, but I feel that— [*She breaks into sobs.*]

VOLODYA. Asya! aren't you ashamed? I give you my word of honor, I haven't yet made up my mind.

ASYA. [*With a glimmer of hope.*] Are you telling me the truth?

VOLODYA. Of course I am telling you the truth. Upon my word, Asya! Don't cry; it's bad enough as it is.

ASYA. I won't, any more. [*Smiling through her tears.*] It's Senya's fault. He frightened me. I know it's stupid. Don't be angry with me.

VOLODYA. I couldn't be angry with you if I tried, Asya.

ASYA. Couldn't you? Then it's all right; then I'll get over it soon. You see, it's all gone already. I am perfectly calm again. [*She laughs through her tears.*] I am a goose.

VOLODYA. No; you are not a goose—you are a dear. [*He takes her hands and puts them on his shoulders.*] Asya, suppose I really went to the war—would you—would you in that case agree—h'm—to be my wife?

ASYA. What? [*She regards him with tenderness, then suddenly kisses him and runs away.*]

VOLODYA. Asya! [*ASYA runs into OLGA in the doorway.*]

OLGA. [*Distracted, her face discolored from weeping.*] Where are you going, Asya? We'll have breakfast soon. Don't go. They are leaving us, Asya. It's terrible, isn't it?

ASYA. [*Not yet recovered from the excitement of the kiss.*] Yes—I'll be back soon. [*She disappears through the door. VOLODYA sits down at the window and lights a cigarette. OLGA goes over to him and gently strokes his hair.*]

OLGA. Ah, Volodya, Volodya! What is this war for? Can you tell me? What is it for? I don't understand it. Here we were, living quietly, and all of a sudden!—I am so sorry for Nina.

[*VOLODYA takes her hand and kisses it, without replying.*]

OLGA. But maybe nothing will happen, after all? Eh, Volodya?

VOLODYA. How so? The war has begun already, Mamma.

OLGA. I know it has. But maybe they'll settle it somehow over there. They'll just take a look at each other, and they'll say, "We are fools—that's what we are!" Then they'll break up and go each his own way.

VOLODYA. [*Involuntarily smiling.*] Things don't happen that way, Mamma.

OLGA. But it's such a pity, Volodya. It's raining and wet outside. They might all catch cold there. God forbid! I think the best thing would be if they just dropped the whole business and went home.

VOLODYA. It's not so simple.

OLGA. But it is better if it is simple.

VOLODYA. Oh, better! That doesn't count. Mother, would you let me go?

OLGA. Where?

VOLODYA. There,—to the war.

OLGA. [*Angrily.*] What! You too? Aren't there enough? What are you talking about? Do you imagine I'll let you go?

VOLODYA. I'll go of myself.

OLGA. [*Indignantly throwing up her hands.*] Don't talk nonsense, please. My heart is sore enough as it is. However such a thing could have come into your head! Just you wait; I'll tell Asya. She'll give it to you for talking such rubbish. [*VOLODYA laughs.*] He laughs! The idea! He thinks it's funny,—a matter to laugh about. Piotr says that if he were younger he'd go, too. What has come over you, for heaven's sake? You all act as though you had gone crazy. [*She goes to the table,*

aggrieved.] You'd better go and tell them to come to breakfast. Vladimir has to leave soon, and if they don't hurry, he'll have to go away hungry.

[VOLODYA goes out, and soon returns with PIOTR, the Prince, DAUE, and SEMYONOV.]

OLGA. Sit down, gentlemen. Sit down, Daue, my boy. I have made you your favorite dish,—cutlets. Eat for your health. No one will make cutlets for you out there. And then you will remember me.

DAUE. I will not forget you, even without the cutlets.

PIOTR. Where are Nina and Vladimir?

SEMYONOV. They'll be here in a moment.

OLGA. Eat; help yourselves, please. Will you have some whiskey, Prince?—Piotr?

[NINA and VLADIMIR come in. NINA's eyes are red from crying.]

OLGA. Sit down here, Ninochka,—Vladimir!

PIOTR. [*Picking up flask.*] Vladimir, will you have a drink?—Will you, Daue?

DAUE. I think I will—although—

[ASYA enters quietly and takes a seat at the end of the table farthest removed from VOLODYA. She tries not to look at him.]

OLGA. Drink, drink. It will keep you in good condition for the journey. Else you might catch cold—God forbid. It's a long way.

PRINCE. Are you going on horseback?

DAUE. Yes, to the station.

PRINCE. When does the train leave?

DAUE. They say at six o'clock. But I don't believe it'll start till much later.

PRINCE. [*Making a conscious effort to keep up the conversation.*] Strange, a large town like ours,

with soldiers always stationed here, and no railroad in case of emergency. This could happen only in Russia.

SEMYONOV. I know a city, one of our government capitals, with a population of more than one hundred thousand, and the nearest railway station is about sixty miles away. Yes, it happens.

PIOTR. They are going to begin to build a railroad here next year. The engineers have already come to make the preliminary survey. Yes, nowadays it's different. In 1877, when we marched to the frontier—

OLGA. Now, now! We have heard the story already.

PIOTR. Upon my word! What does it mean? Why can't I tell—

[NINA begins to weep quietly; VLADIMIR throws a quick glance at her, and hangs his head.]

OLGA. Ninochka, don't! It's enough— Why do you go on this way, really? You are only upsetting Vladimir.

NINA. [*Hurriedly.*] It's nothing—it's only—nervousness. [*With a queer, nervous smile.*] Yet I can't help thinking that it's awfully funny. Really, just funny.

[*Everyone tries to avoid looking at her, pretending to be occupied with preparations for the journey. VLADIMIR hangs his head still lower.*]

OLGA. [*Cautiously.*] Shall I give you some medicine drops?

NINA. [*Starting.*] What for? You think I am getting hysterical, Mamma? No; it's not that. It really struck me as funny all of a sudden, that's all.

Look at Daue, for example.—Where is your violin, Daue?

DAUE. I just meant to ask you to—

NINA. [*Not listening to him.*] Can't you see what a terrible comedy it is? Somewhere, in some place, there is a Wilhelm, a Germany. You didn't see Germany, Daue. Neither did I. And yet we are all crying, taking leave of each other, breaking up our lives completely. Daue is going to the war! Isn't it ridiculous? Do you want to go to war, Daue?

DAUE. It isn't a question of my personal wish, Nina Petrovna. Everybody is going.

NINA. [*With hectic irritation.*] Everybody! What do you care about everybody?

OLGA. Don't you think you had better take some valerian, Ninochka? I'll bring it to you; will you take it,—yes?

NINA. [*With growing unnatural excitement.*] Oh, Mamma, let me alone! What do you want of me? I want to say—

OLGA. [*With tears.*] Ninochka, my dear girl!

NINA. [*Pushing her mother aside.*] I have my life to live. I don't interfere with anybody. I don't harm anybody. It may be a small, insignificant life I am leading, but I don't want anybody to mar and destroy it. No, I don't!

OLGA. [*Patting her vigorously on the head.*] But what's to be done, Ninochka? You are not the only one. Everybody is hit by it in the same way as you.

NINA. Is it my fault? That's their business. I don't want to have my life sacrificed to anybody.

PIOTR. [*Quite unexpectedly.*] Only people without a country can speak that way, Nina!

OLGA. Oh, leave her alone, Piotr. As if you don't see that—

PIOTR. [*Without listening, and not understanding.*] Only Russia's enemies can speak that way. [*Striking the table with his fist.*] In such a time as this we have no right to speak about our own personal life. We have no right to argue and reason.

OLGA. Piotr! Piotr!

PIOTR. We must all go and die, and we mustn't reason about it. I am an old man, but, should it become necessary, I will go without question, because the whole of Russia, my country, needs my life. What are you in comparison to the destiny of Russia? I will not permit it. No one in my house shall dare to—

OLGA. [*Shouting.*] Piotr!

NINA. [*In a subdued voice.*] I know, I know, Papa dear. [*She weeps.*]

OLGA. [*Fexed and in tears.*] Ah, Piotr, you always jump in like that! Good heavens!

PIOTR. [*Embarrassed.*] What did I do? I am only saying that—in a time such as Russia is going through now—

OLGA. Oh, go along; stop it. Ninochka, calm yourself. You mustn't go on this way.—Vladimir!

NINA. I'll soon get over it— I only just— Don't pay any attention to me. It will pass away.

[*A long, oppressive silence follows.*]

SEMYONOV. [*In studied simplicity.*] Will you have some beer, Daue?

OLGA. Will anyone have tea? I have had the samovar prepared. Prince, will you have a glass of tea?

PRINCE. No, thank you.

[*There is silence again. Suddenly NINA rises and walks out. All remain silent, following her with their eyes.*]

OLGA. You had better go to her, Vladimir. Go, go, my dear.

VLADIMIR. Yes.—Excuse me, gentlemen.

SEMYONOV. Certainly, certainly.

[VLADIMIR gets up and quickly passes out.]

PRINCE. [After a pause.] Yes, it's hard for those who have near ones.

DAUE. [In an unnaturally buoyant voice.] I am all right. I have nothing except my violin. If I get killed, it won't play by itself. [He laughs.]

SEMYONOV. [With an artificial smile.] Yes, that's so.

SIDORENKO. [Appearing in the door.] The quartermaster has just run in here, sir, and said that the commander has arrived.

DAUE. Already? [He rises quickly and looks at the clock.] Yes, it's really time. We are late. I'll have to run.

[All get up and make hurried motions, not knowing what to do.]

DAUE. Yes—so we are off. [He hesitates a moment, smiles awkwardly, then, with a resolute shake of the head, says:] Well—now— Goodby, Olga Petrovna. Thank you for everything. [He kisses her hand.]

OLGA. [With tears, kissing him on the forehead.] Goodby, my boy, goodby. God grant that you return home alive and sound.

DAUE. [With a show of boldness.] We'll get back, with the help of God. Not everybody is going to be killed, you know. Goodby, Piotr Ivanovich. Let me kiss you—maybe we'll never see each other again.

PIOTR. Now, now! Why goodby? Goodby!

DAVE. All right, goodbye. Everything is possible.—Well, Volodya, are you going with us to the station? That's good. Goodby, Prince. I wish you all the very best for yourselves. And now— Where is Nina Petrovna? I suppose she has no time to think of me now. Tell her goodbye for me, and give her my thanks for everything. Let her remember sometimes how we made music together. I have been meaning to ask her to take care of my violin. It's a very good, very expensive violin.

OLGA. Don't worry about the violin, Dane. We'll keep it safe for you. You just come back alive and in good health. You are going to perform some fine concerts for us still with Ninochka, I am sure.

DAVE. [*With a faint smile.*] Hardly. It's all over with my music. [*Throwing up his hands.*] Oh, well, it's all the same. I haven't said goodbye to you yet, Aleksandra Ivanovich. I wish you a happy life, Miss Aleksandra.

[*ASYA remains silent, weeping.*]

DAVE. What else was it I wanted to say? No—nothing. Goodby once more.

ALL. Goodby! Goodby! A safe return!

DAVE. [*Stopping abruptly at the door, with an embarrassed smile.*] You won't laugh at me, will you?—I'd like to take another look at it. [*He opens the violin case, but instantly slaps it shut again. Flinging up his hands.*] Oh, nonsense. Goodby for good now. Thank you all.

[*He quickly goes out, followed by the others, and the dining-room is emptied. Outside on the steps are heard the calls of, "Goodby! Goodby! Come back soon!" Then the door falls to with a bang, and there is silence. Only SIDORENKO remains on the stage, in the hallway.*]

There is a pause. VLADIMIR enters hurriedly and passes directly to the hallway. SIDORENKO hands him his cap and hangs his sword on him. VLADIMIR takes a step toward the door, stops, stands still for a moment, then quickly returns to the dining-room. NINA rushes in and, silent, without tears, flings herself on his neck.]

VLADIMIR. Nina! Nina! My darling! My own! [*He repeatedly strokes her head and kisses her hair, and then looks about helplessly. ASYA quietly re-enters the room and rushes towards them.*]

VLADIMIR. Asya, help!—Ninotchka!

[*ASYA holds NINA back. VLADIMIR tears himself away from her embrace and goes out quickly, almost running. NINA pushes ASYA aside and, with a piercing shriek, flings herself after her husband. She staggers and drops into the arms of ASYA and SIDORENKO.*]

CURTAIN

ACT III

The time is two months later.

The scenery is the same as in the second act. It is evening. The lamp is burning. The samovar is on the table. OLGA PETROVNA is sitting at the table near the samovar. On the opposite side sits PIOTR IVANOVICH with his own special tea cup and a newspaper before him. ASYA is giving tea to a boy and a girl, the children of an officer killed in the war. SEMYONOV is sitting at a little table aside from the rest, smoking. On the wall is a large war map with little flags of different colors stuck into it.

ASYA. Sonya, do you want some more?

SONYA. [*Quietly.*] Thank you.

ASYA. Kolya, you mustn't rattle the spoon. Drink nicely.

OLGA. Sonya, how is your mother? Is she well?

SONYA. Yes, thank you.

KOLYA. [*Gleefully.*] Mamma cries all the time. Her eyes are we-ed, we-ed, like a lobster's.

ASYA. [*With a faint smile.*] Lobsters' eyes aren't red.

KOLYA. Aren't they? What color are they then?

ASYA. Black.

KOLYA. Black? Why are they black?

ASYA. Because God made them so.

KOLYA. Why did God make them so?

ASYA. [*Patiently.*] Because it's the way He thought they ought to be.

KOLYA. Ought to be?

ASYA. Yes, ought to be.

KOLYA. Our Jerry has yellow eyes like a cat's.

ASYA. All right, drink your tea, drink—Sonyechka, will you have some jam?

SONYA. Thank you.

[There is a silence.]

OLGA. It's a month today since Volodya left. I wonder where he is now, poor boy?

[Another silence ensues. Then the bell rings. SEMYONOV quietly steps into the antechamber and opens the door. The Prince enters, takes off his overcoat, and walks into the dining-room.]

PIOTR. Ah, the Prince!

PRINCE. *[He goes round the table and shakes hands with everyone; when he comes near SONYA, she jumps off the chair and makes a courtesy.]* It's so dreary everywhere one doesn't know where to go or what to do with oneself. I hope you are not mortally sick of me, Olga Petrovna.

OLGA. How, Prince, what makes you say that? Of course we are not. We are always very glad to see you. Ninochka is in better spirits, too, when you are around. She is so dejected, poor girl.

PRINCE. Is she well?

OLGA. How can she be well when she doesn't eat anything? She keeps brooding and brooding. Will you have a glass of tea, Prince?

PRINCE. Yes, very glad to. *[He takes the glass.]* It's cold and cloudy outside. The city is all dead, no life at all. Have you had word from your people recently?

OLGA. There was a letter from Vladimir yesterday, but nothing from Volodya for a whole week. He used to write every day. Then the letters suddenly stopped. Asya is beginning to worry fear-

fully, and I am terribly worried also. Something might happen, God forbid. It doesn't take long to catch cold. Piotr Ivanovich reads the papers every day, but I am afraid to. When I look at a newspaper and see all the killed and wounded and lost—lost with no trace of them left behind—I feel as if I had been knocked in the head with a club.

PRINCE. I think if anything happened they would let you know. And as to your not getting any letters, that's not surprising.

PIOTR. They have nothing to write; so they don't write. It's all well for us here; we have nothing to do; but out there they have no time for trifles—they have work to do.

OLGA. I know, Piotr, but yet—there is Asya—she is worrying herself to death. I am not speaking about myself, though I am so, so sorry for them. Piotr Ivanovich is trying to put up a bold front. But don't let him fool you. I know he can't sleep nights. He keeps pacing the room to and fro, to and fro like a pendulum.

PIOTR. [*Angrily.*] It's insomnia that keeps me from sleeping. You know very well I always suffer from insomnia at this time of the year.

OLGA. Don't be telling stories, Piotr. Insomnia? Nonsense!

[*There is silence.*]

PRINCE. You are still taking care of the children, Aleksandra Ivanovich?

ASYA. [*Quietly.*] Yes, I am.

OLGA. Taking care of the children! She should have been taking care of her own by this time. Upon my word, I cannot understand you! Are you crazy, all of you, or what! What nonsense to marry and then part! Neither a wife nor a widow! The idiocy of it passes my comprehension.

AYSA. I wanted it myself, Mother.

KOLYA. [*In a ringing voice.*] My father got killed in the war. The Germans killed him.

PRINCE. [*Startled by the unexpectedness of the child's remark.*] What?

ASYA. [*Hurriedly.*] Drink your tea, Kolya; drink, it'll get cold.

KOLYA. I am.

ASYA. Go on, go on, drink.

[*There is silence, during which NINA quietly comes in.*]

NINA. The Prince? I didn't know you were here. Why didn't you let me know, Mamma?

PRINCE. I've just come.

NINA. [*Quietly seating herself at the table opposite the Prince.*] What a long, dreary day this has been.

OLGA. Don't think so much about it and it won't seem so long to you.

NINA. [*With a faint smile.*] I should be glad not to think, Mamma, but it thinks itself.

[*There is silence.*]

PRINCE. I have a piece of sad news to tell you: Dane's body arrived at the station today.

[*At this remark all raise their heads. OLGA PETROVNA wipes her eyes with her handkerchief. PIOTR IVANOVICH frowns and buries his face in the newspaper. There is silence.*]

NINA. Poor Dane! An end to all his music now. You remember how he had set his heart on going to Petrograd to study, and how he had made all his plans for giving up the army and following his great ambition.

PRINCE. Fate decreed differently, it seems.

SEMYONOV. [*With heat.*] What Fate? A monstrous insane outrage, not Fate!

PRINCE. Yes—of course.

[*There is silence.*]

OLGA. You remember, Asya, how he came back and wanted to take a last look at his violin. "They'll kill me," he said, "and the violin won't play by itself." [*Sobbing.*] God! God! What is happening in the world!

SEMYONOV. A lot of stupidity and wickedness is happening.

[*There is silence.*]

NINA. We knew a week ago that Dane had been killed. But what does it mean—"Killed?" It's so hard to grasp the significance of it. Only now I seem to realize what it implies when I know that he has been brought here, that somewhere at the station there is a car and that in a coffin is lying Dane—that he is lying there and doesn't know that we are talking about him. It's so heart-rending! How terrible war is!

PRINCE. Yes, it is terrible. And yet there is a great deal of tragic beauty in it. I don't know how it is, but I feel drawn to the war myself; something pulls me to it.

SEMYONOV. [*In an undertone.*] It seems to be a very mild form of attraction.

ASYA. [*Reprovingly.*] Senya!

PRINCE. [*Who has not caught SEMYONOV's remark.*] What's that, Semyon Nikolayevich?

SEMYONOV. Nothing, nothing.

PRINCE. What is life here? It is not even a game; it is just a long-drawn-out agony. We don't live here; we just exist. All our interests, our little troubles and preoccupations, are so trivial, so insig-

nificant. Our actions are commonplace. But there, face to face with death, the everyday shell drops off, and man become that which he ought always to be—the tragic bearer of heroic ideas.

SEMYONOV. [*To himself.*] He's going it hard.

[*ASYA shakes her head at him reproachfully.*]

PRINCE. [*Contemplatively.*] It may seem strange, perhaps, but I honestly envy those who are in the thick of it. There is movement, fight, real life out there.

NINA. You say you envy them, but my heart bleeds for them. Hungry, cold, always facing death and pain and misery; what sort of life can it be! It is one continuous agony, not life. How many killed, how many maimed, how many widows and orphans, how much wretchedness and suffering! And all this on account of one man's whim. What an injustice! what an atrocity! No, my whole being revolts against this butchery.

[*There is silence.*]

NINA. [*Disconsolately.*] It's so hard! My God, it's so hard! I don't know—maybe I am a silly woman, but I began to sew, making underwear for the wounded soldiers. I worked till I got so tired I could work no more. And suddenly I had the feeling that all this didn't make out my life; it didn't represent me; it didn't make me forget my own cares and experiences. I mean to take up work in the hospital. I'll try. I don't know if my nerves will stand it. And so I drift from one thing to another, torn out of my native element. No one needs me; I am good for nothing. The most terrible thing is that I hardly ever get any letters, and when I do get them, they have been so long in coming that they have lost

almost all significance. I read, see the familiar hand, and think: But this letter was written twelve days ago. Maybe— [*Her voice quivers.*]

PIOTR. I think it's cowardice and nothing else. It's painful to listen to. The wife of a Russian officer ought to take it differently.

NINA. [*With a mournful, filially submissive smile.*] Ah, Papa, what sort of officer's wife am I? I am a wife, that's all—an insignificant woman whose beloved husband is all in all to her.

PIOTR. [*Shrugging his shoulders.*] There! There! There! And I think—

OLGA. Piotr!

PIOTR. But if I can't listen to these everlasting whinings and lamentations! [*Drawing up his shoulders.*] Why, the idea! A man is defending his country, is fulfilling his sacred duty; and what does his wife think about? Nothing but how to take away his courage and honor. She wants to keep him in the nursery and bedroom.

OLGA. Piotr!

NINA. I don't want that, you know it, Papa.

PIOTR. [*Brushing the remark aside, and rising and flourishing the newspaper in the air, without addressing anyone in particular.*] I can imagine the letters she writes to him. I'll tell you plainly that if I had had a wife like that in my time I'd simply have turned her out of the house. Yes, I'd have turned her out—turned her out. [*To OLGA.*] Oh, let me alone. I say it because it's the way I feel about it. It's abominable! [*He shrugs his shoulders, waves the newspaper and goes out. There is silence.* NINA weeps quietly. The children look with fright from one to another. The Prince remains sitting with bowed head. SEMYONOV puffs vigorously at his cigarette.]

OLGA. There. It's always that way. Don't cry, Ninochka. Don't you know Papa? He himself suffers more than anybody else, but he carries on that way just to relieve his feelings a little. It seems to do him good.

NINA. I know, Mamma dear.

ASYA. Well, children, have you had enough?

SONYA. Yes, thank you.

ASYA. Come, then, I'll take you home. It's time to go to bed. Your mother will be worrying about you. Senya, will you go with us?

SEMYONOV. [*Rising.*] Yes, of course I will.

ASYA. Say goodby now, children, and come.

[SONYA and KOLYA walk up to each one in turn, SONYA making a pretty courtesy, and KOLYA awkwardly scraping his feet. OLGA PETROVNA kisses them. Then ASYA takes them into the anteroom, puts on their hats and coats, and they go out, followed by SEMYONOV.]

OLGA. Poor children. They are orphans now—and with no means of support, either. His salary was all they had to live on. She'll get a pension. But it's not like having a father.

PRINCE. Why does Aleksandra Ivanovich look after them?

OLGA. Out of pity. She has a good heart, that's why. The mother is still crazy with grief. She does nothing but cry the whole day long. If Asya hadn't looked out for the children, they would have had to go to bed without supper, I suppose. No, Prince, don't talk to me about the beauty of war. Maybe I don't understand, but I cannot see anything beautiful in it. No, no, your war is ugly. [*She waves her hand deprecatingly, lays her napkin on the table, and goes towards the door. As she passes NINA, she strokes her head.*] Don't be offended by what Papa

says; Papa is old. He is troubled and grieving for you and Volodya; so he shouts—he doesn't know what about himself.—You stay here and have a chat together. I'll go and see about supper. [*She goes out. There is a long silence. Somewhere a clock strikes the hour of nine.*]

NINA. What an awful evening this is! It's so dreary. In my room you can hear the wind whine in the garden. My heart feels so heavy I seem scarcely able to breathe. Why do I feel so today, Prince?

PRINCE. I don't know. Your nerves are all unstrung.

NINA. Maybe. But if you knew how hard it is! I am so glad you came. The whole day I am by myself. You know what my father is like, and Mamma and Asya have their own troubles. So I wander about alone all the time, like a loafer. There is no one to talk to, no one to pour one's heart out to. Nobody knows; nobody understands. [*She folds her hands on the table with a look of distress and lets her head drop on them.*]

PRINCE. [*Bending over across the table towards her and gently touching her hands.*] You know you have no friend more devoted than I.

NINA. [*Lifting her head and unconsciously drawing back her hands.*] I know it, but I can't speak to you about it.

PRINCE. Why not?

NINA. [*With a sad smile.*] Because I know it can't be pleasant to you to hear me speak—about him. I know you won't say anything, but I can see that every word I say pains you.

PRINCE. [*With a tragic air.*] But what's to be done, Nina Petrovna? Of course I am not going to dissemble and lie. I love you, and now that you are

so unhappy and lonely I love you still more. Of course it will cost me a terrific effort to understand your feelings when you mention Vladimir Aleksandrovich, and when I see you suffering so on his account. But I love you so much that I suffer what you suffer. I strive to forget that you are suffering for a man who stands between me and you, and sometimes actually succeed. I see that you are suffering, and God knows that if it were possible I would go there and take his place and let him come to you.

NINA. [*Putting out her hand to him across the table.*] Thank you, Prince. [*He kisses her hand reverently and immediately lets it go. There is silence.*]

NINA. [*Musingly.*] Who knows? Maybe after all, if— [*She breaks off abruptly and remains silent.*]

PRINCE. [*Quickly.*] What? If what?

NINA. [*With averted gaze.*] Nothing. [*She gets up, goes to the window and, leaning her face against the pane, looks out into the dark night.*] How dark it is! Only the one little light out there! One might think it was late at night, not early in the evening.

PRINCE. [*Coming up to her.*] Nina Petrovna, what were you going to say?

NINA. [*Starting and trembling without turning around.*] Nothing.

PRINCE. [*In a tremulous voice.*] I implore you. It seemed to me that—you can't imagine what it would mean to me. Nina Petrovna, one word! [*NINA turns slowly around, looking at him with strange, wide-open eyes.*]

PRINCE. [*Stretching out his arm towards her.*] I beg of you, Nina! For God's sake!

[*Nina, smiling strangely, puts out her arms to him and lays her hands on his shoulders, drawing him*

lightly towards her and looking long and fixedly into his eyes with an enigmatic expression on her face. Then she pushes him back, covers her face with her hands, and turns her back to him again.]

PRINCE. Nina Petrovna, what does it mean? Nina?

NINA. [*Without turning around, hoarsely.*] It means that I am a low, ugly, depraved woman.

PRINCE. Nina Petrovna!

NINA. [*Imploringly.*] Leave me alone! Go. For heaven's sake leave me! I don't know myself what is the matter with me.

[*There is silence. The Prince looks intently at NINA, and she, as though feeling this gaze upon her, bows her head lower and lower as if something were pressing it down. The Prince suddenly flings his arms rudely around her shoulders and forcibly swings her toward him, looking into her eyes with wild passion.*]

PRINCE. Nina—you—you love me too?

[*Nina does not resist him, but merely closes her eyes and shakes her head faintly in denial.*]

PRINCE. No!—You don't love me!—Then what does all this mean?

NINA. I told you.

PRINCE. What? I don't understand you.

NINA. I—

PRINCE. [*Almost shaking her.*] What?—What?—Don't torture me. You do not love me? No?

NINA. [*She opens her eyes; they look strange and as though covered with a mist.*] No. [*Suddenly she pushes him away almost venomously and walks past him, stopping at the door with her back toward him.*] I love nobody. [*She turns around with a quick gesture and faces the Prince with a look half*

of fright and half of detestation.] I told you I was a low, depraved creature. [*Rapidly.*] You know what?—I love my husband with all my heart, with all my soul. I am all out there, with him—I think only of him—I don't want you; you disgust me. But if you wanted to, I—

PRINCE. [*Making a step towards her.*] Nina!

NINA. [*Drawing back in terror and putting out her hands as though for protection.*] Prince! for God's sake!

PRINCE. [*Coming quickly to her.*] Why do you torture me and yourself?

NINA. [*Pressing against the door post.*] It isn't I—I don't want this.

PRINCE. [*Seizing her outstretched arms and pulling her to him.*] Nina!

NINA. [*Struggling fiercely to twist her hands free.*] Let me go! How dare you! Let me go! [*She tears herself away, looking savagely at him out of the corners of her eyes, and rushes out, banging the door after her.*]

The Prince remains standing a long time with head hanging as if dazed. Then he turns around and sees SEMYONOV, who has entered unobserved, standing at the door.] Ah!

SEMYONOV. [*With derision in his voice.*] Yes. That's right. Not bad for a beginning.

PRINCE. What?

SEMYONOV. [*In the same tone of derision.*] Nothing. [*He sits down with a cool, leisurely air and pulls out the cigar case from his pocket.*] On general principles it's contemptible enough. And yet, after all—animal instincts—law of nature. . . .

PRINCE. [*Controlling himself.*] What do you mean?

SEMYONOV. Just what I say.

PRINCE. [*Haughtily.*] What precisely?

SEMYONOV. You deign to be interested? Very well, as you please.—Naturally, a young, healthy, good-looking woman—her husband driven away to the war—it's a plain case. But if you wish to know my opinion of it, I'll tell you. I don't like your role at all.

PRINCE. [*Contemptuously.*] No?

SEMYONOV. [*With perfect composure.*] No. Imagine! I'll even go further and say it isn't a nice role by any means. And inasmuch as the expression on your face is so plain as to admit no doubt of its meaning, I have no objection to telling you what I mean.

PRINCE. [*Curtly.*] I demand it.

SEMYONOV. [*Sardonically.*] You can't demand anything from me, Your Excellency, for I would send you straight to hell.

PRINCE. [*Making a step forward.*] How dare you?

SEMYONOV. [*Coolly.*] Sh! Sh!

PRINCE. But I demand!

SEMYONOV. [*Mockingly.*] Again you demand! Oh, well, what's the difference? [*In an even voice, pronouncing every word with deliberate emphasis.*] You know very well that she does not love you, that she loves her husband. You simply excite her as a man. Therefore, even should you succeed in catching the right moment, I tell you honestly I shouldn't envy you. Your position will be an extremely humiliating one.

PRINCE. [*He shrugs his shoulders and, laughing contemptuously, goes to the table and sits down.*] All this is very interesting, and I hope to talk to you about it at another time and in another place.

SEMYONOV. [*Scowling and tilting his head to one side.*] What? A duel? No, No. Drop that talk. It's true these are war times. But still I don't propose to give up my life for anything like this. It will have to be something more interesting.

PRINCE. [*Contemptuously.*] You decline?

SEMYONOV. Yes, I decline. Just fancy!

PRINCE. Oh, well, you will change your mind.

SEMYONOV. No. This is final. I assure you, I haven't the slightest inclination to fight with you, and if you are going to try to force me by petty annoyances, then let me tell you again that, after all, these are war times and I have the proper kind of weapon to put an end to them forever.

PRINCE. [*Sneeringly.*] A revolver?

SEMYONOV. Yes, a revolver. And not a bad revolver, either; a present from the late Daue. [*Changing his tone.*] And if you will permit yourself to badger me in any way, I promise you I'll shoot your head off as calmly and deliberately as I am talking to you now.

PRINCE. We shall see.

SEMYONOV. We shall see.

PRINCE. At any rate, I shall get ahead of you, Mr. Semyonov.

[*The bell rings. SEMYONOV rises and slowly goes to the door and opens it. He is heard speaking to someone. Then the door shuts and SEMYONOV returns, looking troubled and uneasily eyeing a telegram which he holds in his hand.*]

PRINCE. I want to tell you only this—

SEMYONOV. [*Frowning fiercely.*] Listen, Prince; let's stop this conversation for the present. We'll finish it some other time. Here is—a telegram. [*He goes over to the door and half opens it.*] Piotr Ivanovich! Ho, Piotr Ivanovich!—What's the mat-

ter with them out there? Are they asleep?—[*He looks at the telegram.*] Do you know what I think, Prince?

PRINCE. [*Still contemptuously.*] What do you want?

SEMYONOV. [*Ignoring his sneering manner.*] I don't like this telegram.

PRINCE. [*Alarmed, rising.*] What is it?

SEMYONOV. It's from out there—addressed to Piotr Ivanovich direct. [*Speaking quickly.*] I think we ought to open it and read it first.

PRINCE. But—

SEMYONOV. [*Impatiently.*] But what "but"? The circumstances call for it. I don't do it out of curiosity. Suppose something has happened? Then we can at least prepare them, break the news as gently as possible. Who knows what fool concocts these telegrams, anyway? [*He opens the telegram, reads it, and then, lifting his face, which has turned strangely grave, he holds out the telegram to the Prince.*] It has come. [*He steps quickly to the wall and remains standing there with his face to it.*]

PRINCE. [*After rapidly glancing over the telegram, and looking at SEMYONOV with an expression of horror.*] Good God! What's to be done now? What does it mean?

SEMYONOV. [*He remains standing in the same position with his back to the Prince. He speaks hoarsely.*] What? Killed! That's all!—They've killed him. [*He turns around swiftly, snatches the telegram from the Prince's hands and sticks it in his pocket.*] My! How stupid! Why are you standing there like that? Go tell Nina Petrovna. She'll know how to manage it better than we—and I'll try to break it to Asya.—Well? Why aren't you going? Go, please.

[The Prince obediently crosses over to the door and goes out.]

SEMYONOV. There! Volodya, too! The devil!

[He bites his moustache, and remains standing in the middle of the room, sunk in thought.—A shrill, piercing cry is heard from a distance inside the house. SEMYONOV trembles, lets his moustache drop out of his mouth, and listens. The cry is repeated. Hurried steps are heard and the Prince runs in.]

PRINCE. She heard me tell her. Do you hear? How terrible!

SEMYONOV. Who? Olga Petrovna?

PRINCE. Yes—I told Nina—she heard me. I think we must call a doctor.

SEMYONOV. What's the good of a doctor? The devil!—And Asya will be here, too, any minute.

[The wild shriek draws nearer; the door opens noisily and OLGA PETROVNA rushes in with her gray hair undone, and looking pitiful and terrible. Behind her is NINA running in pursuit of her, weeping, distracted and trying to quiet her mother.]

NINA. Mamma! Dear Mamma! For Heaven's sake!

OLGA. Where is it? Where? It is not true—not true!—Killed!—It's not true!—Volodya killed!—Who said it? *[She reels and falls. NINA and the Prince catch her and put her in a chair. NINA puts her arms around her neck, kisses her, strokes her head and cries.]*

NINA. Mamma! My dear little mother! Mamma! You mustn't.—My darling mother.

PIOTR. *[Entering, and with quick, firm steps crossing directly over to OLGA. His face is gravely solemn and seems as though turned into stone.]* Olga!

OLGA. [*Flinging herself at him and clutching his hands.*] Piotr—they are lying, aren't they? Volodya killed!—Piotr! [*She seizes him with her hands, but instantly pushes him back and tears herself away from NINA's embrace.*] It isn't true.—It cannot be.—Leave me alone!—[*She breaks away from her seat, runs into a corner, goes down on her knees and, as in a fit of madness, begins to bow her head rapidly to the ground.*] Lord, Lord, Lord!—Lord!

[PIOTR IVANOVICH drops heavily on a chair near the table and covers his face with his hands. ASYA appears at the door, in a hat and jacket, pale and frightened. At sight of OLGA PETROVNA kneeling and bowing she stops as though anchored to the spot and her hands drop limply to her sides.]

OLGA. [*Bowing her head.*] They have killed Volodya! Volodya!—Oh, Lord, Lord, help!—Help, O Lord!—[*Seeing ASYA.*] Asya!—Asya darling! Our Volodya is no more. They have killed our Volodya! [*Crawling to her on her knees, she takes both ASYA's hands and kisses them again and again.*] Killed! Asya, Asya darling!—No more Volodya.—O Lord, Lord, Lord!

[ASYA stands absolutely rigid, wide-eyed, and staring blankly before her. NINA sits with her head on the table, sobbing. The Prince and SEMYONOV stand aside with bowed heads. PIOTR IVANOVICH sits at the table, his face buried in his hands, but dry-eyed.]

CURTAIN

ACT IV

It is golden autumn. The house and garden are the same as in the first act. Occasionally dead leaves detach themselves from the trees and float circling to the ground. Through the trees, now bare, are seen the roofs of houses and the churches of the little town. PIOTR IVANOVICH, wearing an oldish military cloak and a cap pulled down over his ears, is sitting with bent back on the balustrade. Near him are a paper and a cigar-case, but he neither reads nor smokes, and he stares blankly straight ahead of him. For a considerable while he remains alone on the stage in this pose. Then the Prince and NINA appear on the terrace. NINA is not in mourning costume, but smartly and elegantly dressed as though for some festive occasion. Her face is animated and beaming. At sight of her father she turns serious, though not without a slight effort.

NINA. Papa, sitting alone again! [*She seats herself beside him and puts her arm around him.*] You'll get sick if you go on this way. It's enough, Papa. It can't be helped. You can't bring him back to life.

PIOTR IVANOVICH. [*Assuming a bold and care-free air.*] Oh, I just came out to get some fresh air. The weather is splendid.—I have been reading the paper.—Lemberg has been taken.—Have you read it, Prince?

PRINCE. [*Hesitatingly.*] Why—er—yes—of course I read it.

NINA. [*Pityingly, stroking him on the shoulder.*] Papa, Lemberg was taken long ago. Have you forgotten?

PIOTR IVANOVICH. [*With an air of interest.*] Was it? When? I didn't know.

NINA. [*With a stealthy, significant look at the Prince.*] You have simply forgotten, Papa.

PIOTR IVANOVICH. Maybe.

NINA. [*Heaving a deep sigh.*] Of course you have. You are not doing right, staying away by yourself all the time and avoiding people. It will hurt you.

PIOTR IVANOVICH. [*With sudden animation.*] It's nothing—a trifle.—You remember Volodya's letter from Yaroslav, Nina?

NINA. Yes, yes, I remember. You musn't speak about it, Papa.

PIOTR IVANOVICH. [*Bowing his head.*] Yes, of course.

NINA. You are only exciting yourself. What can be done? Volodya is not the only one—lots of people have lost their lives.

PIOTR IVANOVICH. [*Listlessly.*] Yes, lots, lots.—What can be done?

PRINCE. [*In an effort to console him.*] After all, your son Volodya died an enviable death.

[PIOTR IVANOVICH looks with fright at the Prince as though afraid he might make some tactless, un-called-for remark, then quickly lowers his eyes.]

PRINCE. He died like a hero. This ought to be some comfort to you after all. An officer who was wounded in the same action told me that if it hadn't been for your son the whole regiment would have been annihilated.

PIOTR IVANOVICH. [*With a queer, sickly frown.*] Yes, yes—I know—yes.

PRINCE. He said that, notwithstanding the terrible fire, Volodya never once went down into the trench. He remained above, calmly directing the firing.

PIOTR IVANOVICH. Yes, yes—I know—yes.

PRINCE. At last the Austrians concentrated almost their entire fire on his division. And when he was wounded, he told his comrades that he was happy to die like that. It was a heroic death, say what you will. Imagine the strength of soul required to die feeling happy in the cause of one's death. It denotes the highest will power, the sublimest enthusiasm, and you have a right to be proud of your son's memory.

PIOTR. [*Rising with a nervous movement and picking up now the paper, now the cigar-case, and letting them drop.*] Yes, yes—I know—he died a heroic death—proud of his memory—yes, yes. [*Suddenly straightening himself and flourishing the newspaper in the air.*] I know myself that Volodya died the death of a hero. Yes, sir, I know it; I know that he couldn't have done otherwise! Yes, a hero, a hero! What's the use of talking about it? No use! No use, at all! Excuse me! . . . [*He wraps the cloak nervously around him, presses the newspaper to his chest, and quickly walks into the house. NINA and the Prince, a little embarrassed, follow him with their eyes. There is silence.*]

NINA. [*Quietly.*] You must pardon my father, Prince. Volodya's terrible death has made a perfect baby of him. He is only the wreck of his former self.

PRINCE. [*Deferentially and sadly.*] I understand, Nina Petrovna.

NINA. [*Sitting down on the balustrade where her father had been sitting.*] Papa cannot endure to hear anything said about Volodya. You know, he

never wept a tear. He just keeps quiet. And his silence is more horrible than the most fearful crying and sobbing. It is so awfully hard to look at him, so hard! Good God, when will this war end? When will it end? And will those who caused it never be brought to account for all the tears, all the misery?

PRINCE. I think they will.

NINA. Is it possible that after all these horrors there will again be wars and people will again die and be killed? Is it possible that the people will never come to their senses, never understand what they are doing?

PRINCE. I don't think they ever will.

[There is silence.]

NINA. *[Musingly.]* Semyonov said that war can never be done away with because it isn't opposed to human nature, but on the contrary quite in keeping with human nature. Can that be true?

PRINCE. Oh, well, there may be a difference of opinion as to that.

NINA. I don't see how there can be any difference of opinion. *[With heat.]* If it were as Semyonov says, then I think the human race ought simply be wiped off the face of the earth. It would have no right to exist.

[The Prince shrugs his shoulders in indecision.]

There is a pause.]

NINA. What beauty all around! See how the leaves are falling. And the sun shines as though it were afraid it might interfere with the beauty and the stillness. *[She laughs.]* I am happy, Prince. Mamma thinks me shocking for having given up mourning; she says I must have forgotten Volodya. But how can I meet Vladimir in a black dress? I

can't think without tears of poor Volodya, who lies buried somewhere out there in a strange, horrible soil,—but still I am happy. I may be an egotist, I may be a bad woman, but I am happy. When I received the telegram from Vladimir, I thought I'd go mad with joy. I wanted to sing, to dance.

PRINCE. [*Dolefully.*] Yes, of course. But don't you think, Nina Petrovna, it is a little cruel to tell me so?

NINA. [*Recollecting herself, with a wayward smile.*] Oh, I beg your pardon, Prince, but, upon my word, I am so happy that I have forgotten everything. I was inconsiderate. Forgive me. [*She puts out her hand to him.*]

PRINCE. [*Declining to take it.*] I have no right either to forgive or to resent your conduct. I have forced myself into your life, and I can lay no claim to a place in it.

NINA. [*Grieved and sorry, yet with a smile.*] Why do you speak that way, Prince? You know I am very fond of you.

PRINCE. [*With an affected smile.*] Thank you—I value it very highly—but it's not exactly the sentiment I wanted.

NINA. [*Grieved.*] But what can I do?

PRINCE. You can do nothing.—Well, let's drop it. [*He shakes his head.*] What I wanted to say is this. As long as everything was uncertain, I did not think I had a right to leave you. I thought that after all I might be useful—that if the worst should happen, it might be easier for you in your ordeal to know that you had a friend near you, ready to do everything for you.

NINA. [*Quietly.*] I am so grateful to you, Prince.

PRINCE. But now the circumstances are different. Vladimir Aleksandrovich is returning home. His wound cannot be serious, or he would have written you about it. I feel that my further presence here is not needed, that I would be in your own and your husband's way.

NINA. [*Sadly.*] You mean to leave us?

PRINCE. Yes; I am going to Moscow this evening—and I think we shall never see each other again.

NINA. [*After a pause.*] Well, perhaps you are right. You had better go.

PRINCE. [*Bitterly.*] Is that all you have to tell me for our last farewell?

NINA. [*Throwing up her arms in a gesture of helplessness.*] What else can I say?

PRINCE. This, Nina—let me frankly call you by your first name for the first and last time. In my heart I always call you so. [NINA, *in embarrassment, hangs her head and locks her fingers.*—Tell me, have you never had any other feeling for me? Don't be surprised, and don't be frightened at my putting this question to you. I want nothing from you any more; but it would make it easier for me to go if I could think the ruin of my life was only an accident, that the rôle I played in relation to you was not so ridiculous, after all! Spare my masculine self-love. [*He gives a short laugh.*]

NINA. I don't know—I can't tell myself.

PRINCE. So, after all—?

NINA. [*With sudden resolution.*] Listen, Prince! you have been so good to me all this time, I am so thankful to you, I'll tell you. I'll tell you the truth. [*After a second's hesitation.*] Well, yes, there were moments when I loved you.

PRINCE. [*Grasping her hand.*] Nina!

NINA. [*Pulling her hand away.*] But those were moments of weakness, when I felt all alone in the world, convinced that I should never see Vladimir again. [*Lowering her head.*] I am a woman, Prince,—just an ordinary woman, as you once said.—You remember? I cannot live without love. And so, when I thought that Vladimir was killed—[*Fidgeting uneasily, and not looking at him.*] It's ugly, mean—but I—[*She breaks off as under a strain.*]

PRINCE. That means that if—

NINA. [*Frightened, quickly raising her eyes to him.*] Prince! Don't! You mustn't say that. It was simply stronger than myself. [*With lowered voice.*] I am an ugly, immoral person—a woman to be despised.

PRINCE. Maybe. But I love you just as you are, and now more than ever.

NINA. [*Rising quickly.*] Goodby, Prince. You mustn't speak about it any more.

PRINCE. One word, Nina, one word! So, if your husband had really been killed—

NINA. [*Silently for a while she struggles with herself, then with resolution she says quickly:*] Well, yes!

[*There is silence. NINA stands with her face turned away from the Prince, her hands trembling.*]

PRINCE. So! How stupid the ways of life are! Just accident. It's absurd. Thousands of people killed in the war, and—

NINA. [*Drawing herself up and stiffening straight as a cord.*] Prince!

PRINCE. [*Stubbornly and dolefully.*] You are afraid of the words. But if it is the truth!—Why should I mince it, why should I sham and lie, when that which makes you so happy and radiant today

means for me the end of all my hopes, the end of love and happiness? If you can so lightly and so easily sacrifice me to another, then why should I dissemble? I'll tell you the truth—why shouldn't I? When you were looking over the lists of the dead, trembling lest your husband's name be there, I, too, was looking for him.

NINA. [*Indignantly.*] Could you do a thing like that? It's ugly, base.

PRINCE. What is base? To love is base?

NINA. [*Contemptuously.*] What love! Let that word alone! How dare you talk about love?

PRINCE. [*Surprised.*] Nina!

NINA. [*Proudly.*] I am no Nina to you. How dare you call me Nina? You loved me? [*Laughing contemptuously.*] You wanted a good-looking woman, that's all. Why, men like you cannot love. They don't know what it is. Let me tell you now:—I never, never loved you, not for a single moment.—Let me alone! Do you hear? [*She turns quickly around and goes into the house.*]

PRINCE. Nina. [*He remains standing for a long time with head bowed, then he turns around resolutely and goes to the gate. Before he reaches it, he is met by ASYA and SEMYONOV. ASYA is in deep mourning. On the sleeve of SEMYONOV's top-coat is a red cross.*]

SEMYONOV. Ah, Your Excellency! Going already?

PRINCE. Yes, I am going. I want to say goodby to you, Aleksandra Ivanovna.

ASYA. [*Mechanically.*] Goodby.

SEMYONOV. Why this formal leave-taking? Are you going away?

PRINCE. Yes; I am going to Moscow tonight.

SEMYONOV. That so? H'm— Well, I guess it's best.

PRINCE. [*With an affected smile.*] I suppose it is.

SEMYONOV. Well, goodbye, then. You are going away for good, I suppose?

PRINCE. Yes!

SEMYONOV. Goodby.

[*They shake hands and part.*]

SEMYONOV. [*To the Prince at the gate.*] One moment, Prince. [*The Prince stops; SEMYONOV goes over to him.*] I wanted to tell you that—I had a very bad opinion of you—and I am glad to find that you have force and will and dignity. I thought—excuse me—that you were just a plain rascal.—Now I see you have suffered a great deal. Forgive the past. I wish you well.

PRINCE. [*With a touch of haughty irony.*] Thank you; I am deeply moved.

SEMYONOV. Goodby. [*He gives the Prince a vigorous handshake and follows him a while with his eyes. The Prince goes out without looking around. SEMYONOV runs up the steps to overtake ASYA.*] Asya, wait.

ASYA. [*Stopping.*] What is it?

SEMYONOV. Tell you what, let's sit down here a little. The atmosphere inside is stifling; upon my word, it's impossible to breathe. Piotr Ivanovich never says a word, Olga Petrovna cries, and Nina is crazy with joy. We don't exist for her now. Let's sit down here.

ASYA. [*Obediently.*] All right. [*She quietly goes down the steps and takes a seat on the bench under the trees.*] I just wanted to see what Mother was doing.

SEMYONOV. You mean Olga Petrovna?

ASYA. [*Quietly.*] Yes, Mother. She mustn't be allowed to remain alone for long.

SEMYONOV. [*Mechanically.*] You still call her "mother"?

ASYA. [*Quietly.*] Yes.

SEMYONOV. H'm—well, oh, yes! [*After a pause.*] So the Prince is going away. That's good. The fact is, it would all be ridiculous if it weren't so tragic. Strange what a jumble of things life is—tragedy, comedy, and a little merry farce thrown in besides.

ASYA. [*Mechanically, and hardly listening.*] Where is the farce?

SEMYONOV. [*With an insincere laugh.*] Well, between you and me, isn't it a farce? Why not?

ASYA. [*Wearily.*] Oh, stop, Semyon Nikolayevich.

SEMYONOV. I'd be glad to stop, Aleksandra Ivanovna, but I can't.

ASYA. [*Pained.*] It's a bore.

SEMYONOV. For you it's a bore; for me it's misery. What's to be done? You see, the Prince is going away. That means that they have talked themselves to a conclusion, after all. But you and I seem to be absolutely deadlocked; we don't seem to be able to reach a conclusion.

ASYA. [*Pained, glancing all around.*] Really, Seyna—I don't know—what conclusion? All there is to be said has been said over and over again. What good is your persistence?

SEMYONOV. You may think all has been said, but I don't. There is still the last word to be said.

ASYA. Say it, then.

SEMYONOV. It's easy to say "say it."

ASYA. [*Indifferently.*] Don't say it, then.

SEMYONOV. Pshaw! How you throw ice water on a fellow's head! It's cruel, Aleksandra Ivanovna.

ASYA. I won't; I won't. Say what you intend to say. [*There is silence. SEMYONOV looks at ASYA out of the corners of his eyes, twirls his moustache, and raises it to his mouth.*] Well, I have to go, Senya.

SEMYONOV. One moment. Listen, Asya.

ASYA. I am listening.

SEMYONOV. Listen, then. [*Hesitating, then making up his mind.*] I know that you are unhappy, and that you don't care for me. But the situation is this—No, that's not what I wanted to say. I'll tell you straight out. I love you, Asya, and I haven't much longer to live.

ASYA. [*Annoyed.*] You know what I'll tell you, Senya. You have said so much about dying that we have ceased to believe it. For three years now you've been telling us that you are dying. [*She turns away with a mild wave of her hand.*]

SEMYONOV. [*His face changing.*] I beg your pardon for not being dead. Honestly, it isn't my fault.

ASYA. [*Sighing.*] Goodness gracious! Words, words, words! Nothing but words! To what purpose is it all?

SEMYONOV. [*With an affected laugh.*] To this purpose—

ASYA. [*Throwing up her hands and shrugging her shoulders.*] Stop, Semyon Nikolayevich!

SEMYONOV. But if I love you!

ASYA. Oh, for God's sake, how sick I am of this! [*In a burst of vexation.*] You are standing with one foot in the grave and are talking about love. [*She rises.*]

SEMYONOV. [*Also rising, his face pale with rage.*] Yes. So? Fine!— What of it? I have one foot in the grave, but your Volodya has been all in the grave a long time.

ASYA. [*She utters a short shriek and drops down on the bench and covers her face with her hands.*] Oh, Senya!

[*There is silence. SEMYONOV looks at her, his whole body trembling.*]

SEMYONOV. [*Coming to himself.*] Asya! Asya! Forgive me! I—I didn't mean to.—I don't know—

ASYA. [*Suddenly letting her hands fall, in a dead voice.*] It's all the same. [*She rises and slowly goes towards the house.*]

SEMYONOV. [*Following her, not knowing how to undo the effect of the remark he allowed to slip from him in the heat of the conversation.*] Asya, I swear I didn't mean to say it.

NINA. [*Appearing on the balcony.*] Ah, you here? Where is the Prince? Is he gone?

SEMYONOV. Yes.

NINA. [*With a momentary expression of sadness flitting across her face.*] Is he?— Have you been at the station, Semyon Nikolayevich? [*To ASYA as she passes by her towards the house.*] What's the matter? You look so queer. Has anything happened?

ASYA. No; I have a headache. [*She goes out.*]

NINA. Haven't you been at the station?

SEMYONOV. No; I called them up. The train will arrive at three.

NINA. [*Disappointed.*] You said it was due at two.

SEMYONOV. So it is, according to the schedule, but the station master said that it will probably be

an hour late. So far, not a single train has arrived on schedule time.

NINA. Are you going there?

SEMYONOV. No; he is coming on a private train. Nobody will be there except Vladimir Aleksandrovich.

NINA. I ought to go, but— [*Smiling constrainedly.*] I can't. I am so excited I can scarcely contain myself. Even here I am almost crazy. It seems to me, somehow, that he would like it better if I met him at home with no strangers around.

SEMYONOV. [*Mechanically.*] Yes, certainly. The Prince has offered to bring him here in his motor. So you needn't worry.

NINA. What? The Prince?

SEMYONOV. Yes; he said he would go to the station and bring Vladimir Aleksandrovich home.

NINA. [*Her eyes cloud over with a mist.*] How kind of him! Don't you think he is a very kind man, Semyon Nikolayevich?

SEMYONOV. Who? The Prince? Yes, he is—not without a sense of gratitude.—So you are going to remain at home?

NINA. Yes!—I can't— [*She smiles sadly.*] You know, I am afraid.

SEMYONOV. Of what?

NINA. I am just afraid—afraid that when I see the wound—

SEMYONOV. There's nothing to be afraid of. He wrote you it was healing already;—so it can't be very serious. He would have prepared you beforehand, if it were.

NINA. [*With a sickly smile.*] I know it isn't dangerous—and yet— Well, I don't know—I am afraid.

SEMYONOV. You had better stay at home, then, if you are so excited.

NINA. [*Sitting down on the balustrade.*] Sit down, Semyon Nikolayevich— I don't know why, but I have a horror of remaining alone. Asya has gone to Mamma.

SEMYONOV. All right. I'll sit with you. [*He takes a seat opposite NINA.*]

NINA. [*Musingly.*] Now we'll all be together again.

SEMYONOV. Not exactly all.

NINA. [*Sorrowfully.*] No, not all; you are right. Poor Volodya! Poor Daue! I am happy, but am ashamed to be. I am so sorry for Mother, for Asya, for Father.

SEMYONOV. [*Lighting a cigarette.*] Yes, you are lucky, after all.

NINA. He is wounded, though.

SEMYONOV. What if he is? The wound will heal. You know, it's even better so. If he hadn't been wounded, he might have been killed later. Now it's all over. Even if he should want to go again when he is cured, you won't let him. In the meantime the war will end, and then you can begin to live. With the cross of St. George, all roads are open to him. He can get anything he wants. You'll move to Petrograd—I can't for the life of me get used to that name—Petrograd.

NINA. [*Smiling gayly.*] No, no; I won't let him go again. Let others go now. Vladimir has done his part.

SEMYONOV. And has distinguished himself doing it, too.

NINA. [*Radiant.*] Try as I may, I can't imagine Vladimir in war—a hero—under fire. As I see him, he is just a plain, dear man.

SEMYONOV. It's men like him that make heroes.

NINA. [*Ecstatically.*] Ah, Semyon Nikolayevich, if you only knew how happy I am!

SEMYONOV. [*With a friendly smile.*] I am glad you are, from the bottom of my heart.

NINA. [*Plaintively.*] Mamma is angry at me because I don't wear black. I haven't forgotten Volodya, but I simply couldn't wear mourning today. My heart is full of sunshine, so how can I put on crêpe?

SEMYONOV. Why should you? What good is it?

[*The mother enters, with stooped back, wrinkled face, and hair turned completely gray. ASYA follows close behind her.*]

NINA. There is Mamma.

OLGA PETROVNA. [*Listlessly.*] How do you do, Semyon Nikolayevich? Thank you for coming. At least you haven't forgotten. [*Sitting down on the top step.*] Nina, she has forgotten her brother Volodya.

NINA. [*Fexed.*] Oh, Mamma! I have not forgotten him. Can't you understand?

OLGA. [*Looking disapprovingly at her.*] Yes, yes; don't tell me. You have forgotten, and that's all.

NINA. [*Excitedly.*] All right, I'll go and put on a black dress. I don't know what you want of me.

ASYA. Nina!

NINA. [*Instantly calming herself.*] But really—I don't know—Mother has been after me that way the whole day long!

[*She turns away. The mother follows her with the same disapproving look, shaking her head.*]

SEMYONOV. [*To change the subject.*] How is your health, Olga Petrovna?

OLGA. What health! And what do I want health for? Volodichka in gone. [*She sobs.*]

ASYA. Mamma, you mustn't. [*She sits down beside her and presses up close to her.*]

OLGA. [*Stroking her hair.*] Here is Asenyka; I have her left. Asenyka has not forgotten Volodya. So we'll live with her. [*She presses ASYA's head to her bosom.*] My poor little widow!

[*There is silence.*]

SEMYONOV. Soon Vladimir Aleksandrovich will be here.

OLGA. [*Crossly.*] Yes, he'll be here.—Well, thank God! But Volodichka will not be here. Our Volodichka will never be here again. You remember how you used to call them? Volodya the Big, and Volodya the Little. So Volodya the Big is coming, and Volodya the Little is not.

[*ASYA cries.*]

NINA. Mamma, you are always exciting her.

OLGA. I am not exciting her.—Am I exciting you, Asenka?

ASYA. [*Trying to keep back her tears.*] No, Mamma; don't mind me.

OLGA. Yes; Volodya the Big is coming.

NINA. [*Shrugging her shoulders.*] You say it as though you were sorry he wasn't killed.

[*There is silence.*]

OLGA. Don't be angry, Ninochka. I am so sorry for Volodya.

NINA. Why, Mamma, aren't we all sorry?

OLGA. Oh, for you it's different. Your husband is coming home, and you'll console yourself with him. You are young; there is a long life ahead of

you. But for your father and me there is nothing left now but to die.

NINA. Am I not your daughter? Am I nothing to you any more?

OLGA. [*Quietly, without listening to her.*] They have killed Volodya—killed him.

KATYA. [*Appearing at the door.*] Shall I set the table?

NINA. [*Rising quickly.*] Yes, of course; it's going on three already. Mamma, I'll go and attend to everything.

OLGA. [*Mechanically.*] Go, go.

[*NINA and KATYA go out.*]

OLGA. Ninochka is annoyed with me. She thinks me a nuisance.

ASYA. Mamma, how can you talk like that! You ought to be ashamed.

OLGA. Well, it's only natural. She is young, and I am boring her sick.

ASYA. She loves you, too.

OLGA. I know she does. But no one will ever love as Volodya did.

ASYA. And I, Mamma?

OLGA. You are a darling. But, after all, you are not my flesh and blood. You will forget Volodichka, and you will marry.

ASYA. I will never marry.

OLGA. [*Shaking her head.*] God knows, God knows, Asenka.

[*The chugging of an automobile and the tooting of a horn are heard from a distance. ASYA and SEMYONOV sit up and listen.*]

SEMYONOV. [*Getting up.*] What's that? Is it they, already? It's only a little after two.

ASYA. [*Almost frightened.*] I don't know; the car seems to be coming this way.

[ASYA and SEMYONOV walk down the steps
and listen.]

ASYA. It's they. There is Sidorenko.—Nina!
Nina!

[She runs towards the house, then stops. SIDORENKO,
tattered, sunburnt, but beaming, pushes through
the gate with the trunk.]

SEMYONOV. Hello, Sidorenko!

SIDORENKO. How do you do, Mr. Semyonov. [He
puts the trunk down on the ground.]

SEMYONOV. Where is Vladimir Aleksandrovich?

SIDORENKO. He is here. The machine had to stop
a little way off; it couldn't get through the lane.

[The Prince rushes in, looking pale and distracted,
followed by a Red Cross surgeon and a soldier.]

PRINCE. [Goes up to SEMYONOV, takes his arm,
and pulls him aside. In a subdued voice.] Prepare
Nina Petrovna. Vladimir Aleksandrovich is very
severely wounded.

SEMYONOV. [Frightened.]. What? Severely?
Then why didn't he—

PRINCE. [Hastily.] He didn't want to write—
[In a low voice.] Both of his legs are torn off.

SEMYONOV. [Recoiling.] Impossible!— Asya!

ASYA. [Who has heard all the Prince has said to
SEMYONOV.] I am going—at once, and— [She runs
into the house.]

PRINCE. The car can't drive up here. We must
get an armchair or something.

SEMYONOV. Armchair? Yes, directly. Here is
one. [He grabs hold of the rush-bottom chair.]

PRINCE. Take it, gentlemen.

[The surgeon and the soldier quickly carry off the
armchair. The Prince starts to go after
them, but instantly turns back.]

PRINCE. Please go and see to Nina Petrovna, and I'll stay here.

SEMYONOV. All right. [*He runs out.*]

OLGA. [*In alarm.*] What is it, Prince? Is Vladimir Aleksandrovich very sick?

PRINCE. Yes.

OLGA. [*Rising quickly.*] Poor Ninochka! Why, how is that? What's the matter with him?

PRINCE. Both his legs are torn off.

[*OLGA PETROVNA silently crosses herself and drops limply on her seat. PIOTR IVANOVICH walks in rapidly. Immediately after, NINA runs by, closely followed by ASYA.*]

NINA. What is it, Prince?—Vladimir is wounded?—Dangerously?—Impossible!—Prince!—

PRINCE. Steady! Be calm!—Steady, Nina Petrovna!

NINA. [*Running down into the garden.*] Where is he? Where am I to go?

PRINCE. He'll be brought in soon.—Don't go.

NINA. Brought in? [*She stares at him, horrified. The Prince lowers his eyes, then runs to the gate. A group of people appear at the gate, carrying VLADIMIR ALEKSANDROVICH in the armchair. He is lean, haggard, and emaciated. The stumps of his legs are covered with a blanket. On seeing NINA, the men put the armchair on the ground, the blanket slips off, and shows the stumps wrapped up in white, formless, ugly rags.*]

VLADIMIR. [*Putting out his hand.*] Nina! Ninochka!

[*NINA starts back from him in terror, reels, and falls straight into the Prince's arms as he holds them out to catch her.*]

CURTAIN

THE LITTLE COUNTRY THEATRE.



NORTH DAKOTA is a prairie state. Its land area comprises seventy-one thousand square miles of a rich black soil equal in its fertility to the deposits at the delta of the Nile River in Egypt. Its climate is invigorating. The air is a dry, wholesome air. The summer months are delightful. The fields of golden grain are inviting. The winters, on the other hand, are long and dreary, and naturally lonely. No geographical barriers break the monotony of the lonesome prairie existence. A deadly dullness hovers over each community.

✓ The population of the state is distinctly rural. At the present time there are one hundred and forty towns with less than five hundred inhabitants. Of every eight persons to a square mile, seven are classed as rural. Seventy-two per cent of the people live in unincorporated territory. The vocation of the masses is agriculture.

One of the most interesting characteristics of this prairie commonwealth is the fact that a little over seventy-two per cent of the population is either foreign born or of foreign descent. Only twenty-eight per cent are Americans. Of the twenty-five different nationalities represented in the state, there are one hundred thousand Norwegians, sixty thousand Russians, forty-five thousand Germans, and large settlements of Canadians, Swedes, Danes, Austrians, Irishmen, Englishmen, Hungarians, Scotchmen, Icelanders, Frenchmen, Welshmen, Bohemians, Dutchmen, Bulgarians, Greeks, Turks, and Italians. All

of these foreign elements came originally from countries whose civilizations are much older than our own. All have had some form of social recreation in their previous national life which, if brought to light through the medium of some sociological force, would contribute much toward making our American life happier and better. To do this effectively will doubtless be a Herculean task.

In most respects, however, North Dakota is not unlike other states. People there are actually hungry for social recreation. Social stagnancy is a characteristic trait of the small town and the country. Community spirit is at a low ebb. Because of the stupid monotony of the village and country existence, the tendency of the people, young and old, is to move to large cities. Young people leave the small town and the country because of its lack of joy. They want *life*. Old people desert the country because they want better living conditions and more social and educational advantages for themselves and their children. Moral degeneracy in the country, as in the city, is usually due to lack of proper recreation. When people have something healthful to occupy their minds with they scarcely ever think of wrong doing. Students of science attribute the cause of many of the cases of insanity among country people to loneliness. That something fundamental must be done along social lines in the country in order to help people *find themselves*, nobody will dispute. It is a mistaken idea of modern civilization to build great cities at the sacrifice of the country. To rob the country of those who produce will, eventually, weaken our social structure. The problem of the slum in the city will never be satisfactorily settled until the influx of the country people to centers of population is

checked. This migration which continues from the country to the city, year after year, can never be stopped until the inhabitants of the small town and the country find their *true expression in the community*. It is then that they will become better satisfied with their lot, think less of the lure of the city and build up a greater community spirit. The impulse may come from without, but the genuine work of socialization of the country must come from within. The country people themselves must work out their own civilization.

With a knowledge of these basic facts in mind, after a careful study of the requests received during the last seven years from every section of the state for suitable material for presentation on public programs and at public functions, as well as with a personal acquaintance among hundreds of young men and women whose homes are in the country, the idea of The Little Country Theatre was conceived. ✓

The idea conceived became an actual reality when an old dingy chapel on the second floor of the Administration Building at The North Dakota Agricultural College, located at Fargo, North Dakota, was remodeled into what is now known as The Little Country Theatre. In appearance it is most interesting. It is a large playhouse put under a reducing glass. It is just the size of an average country town hall. It has a seating capacity of two hundred. The stage is thirty feet in width, twenty feet in depth, and has a proscenium opening of ten feet in height and fifteen feet in width. There are no boxes and no balconies. The decorations are plain and simple. The color scheme is green and gold, the gold predominating. Three beams finished in golden oak cross the mansard ceiling, the beams projecting down several feet on each side wall, and from them ✓

frosted light bowls and globes are suspended by brass log chains, the indirect lighting giving a soft and subdued tone to the whole theatre. The eight large windows are hung with green draperies. The curtain is a tree shade velour. The birch stained seats are broad and not crowded together. There is a place for a moving picture machine. The scenery is simple and painted in plain colors. Anybody in a country town can make a set like it. The doors are wooden doors; the windows have real glass in them. Simplicity is the keynote of the theatre. It is an example of what can be done with hundreds of village halls, unused portions of school-houses, and the basements of country churches in communities. One of the unique features in connection with The Little Country Theatre is the Coffee Tower. It is just to the right of the lower end of the stage. It, too, is plain and simple. Its function is purely social. After a play or program has been presented, the friends of the Thespians are cordially invited to the Coffee Tower and served with cakes and coffee. Everything possible is done to encourage and cement the bonds of friendship.

The object of The Little Country Theatre is to produce such plays and exercises as can be easily staged in a country school, the basement of a country church, in the sitting room of a farm home, in the village or town hall, or any place where people assemble for social betterment. Its principal function is to stimulate an interest for good clean drama and original entertainment among the people living in the open country and villages, in order to help them find themselves, and that they may become better satisfied with their surroundings. In other words, its real purpose is to use the drama, and all that goes with the drama, as a sociological force in

getting people together and acquainted with each other. Instead of making the drama a luxury of the classes, its aim is to make it an instrument for the enlightenment and enjoyment of the masses.

In a country town, nothing attracts so much attention, proves so popular, pleases so many, or causes so much comment as a home talent play. It is doubtful in my mind whether Sir Horace Plunkett ever appreciated the significance of the statement he once made when he said that the simplest piece of amateur acting or singing done in the village hall by one of the villagers would create more enthusiasm among his friends and neighbors than could be excited by the most consummate performance of a professional in a great theatre where no one in the audience knew or cared for the performer. Nothing interests people in each other so much as habitually working together. A home talent play not only affords such an opportunity but it also unconsciously introduces a friendly feeling in a neighborhood. It is something everybody wants to make a success, regardless of the local jealousies or differences of opinion.

Scarcely a year old, the work of The Little Country Theatre has already justified its existence. It has produced many plays and other forms of entertainment. All the people who have participated in them seem to have caught the spirit. One group of young people from various sections of the state, representing five different nationalities, Scotch, Irish, English, Norwegian, and Swedish, successfully staged *The Fatal Message*, a one-act comedy by John Kendrick Bangs. Another cast of characters from the country presented *Cherry Tree Farm*, an English comedy, in a most acceptable manner. In order to depict Russian life one of the dramatic clubs in

the institution gave *A Russian Honeymoon*. An illustration to demonstrate that a home talent play is a dynamic force in helping people find themselves was afforded in the presentation of *The Country Life Minstrels*, by the Agricultural Club, an organization of young men coming entirely from the country districts. The story reads like a romance. The club decided to give a minstrel show. At the first rehearsal nobody possessed any talent, except one young man. He could clog. At the second rehearsal a tenor and a mandolin player were discovered. At the third, several good voices were found, a quartet, and a twelve-piece band were organized. When the play was presented, twenty-eight different young men furnished a variety of acts equalling those of many a professional company. They all did something and entered into the entertainment with a splendid spirit. Last fall ten young ladies from the country districts of the state of North Dakota presented eight one-act plays. Each one of these young ladies acted also as a director of a play. They not only selected the amateur play which they presented, but they promoted the play and trained the cast of characters as well. One of the plays, entitled *American Beauties*, was staged in a most creditable manner. The young lady who trained it is a product of the company. Every detail was carried out effectively. The other plays likewise were cleverly acted. Two original plays, *For the Cause* and *The New Liberator*, both written by young men in attendance at the institution, were staged. Perhaps the most interesting incident that has occurred in connection with the work of The Little Country Theatre was the staging of a tableau entitled, *A Farm Home Scene in Iceland Thirty Years Ago*, by twenty young men and women of Icelandic descent,

whose homes are in the country districts of North Dakota. The tableau was very effective. The scene represented an interior sitting room of an Icelandic home. The walls were whitewashed. In the rear of the room was a fireplace. The old grandfather was seated in an arm chair near the fireplace reading a story in the Icelandic language. About the room were several young ladies dressed in Icelandic costumes, busily engaged in spinning yarn and knitting, a favorite pastime of an Icelandic home. On a chair at the right was a young man with a violin, playing selections from an Icelandic composer. Through the small windows rays of light, representing the Midnight Sun and the Northern Lights, were thrown. Every detail of the Icelandic home was carried out, even to the serving of coffee with lumps of sugar. Just before the curtain fell, twenty young men, all Icelanders, joined in singing the national Icelandic song, which has the same tune as *America*. The effect of this tableau was tremendous. It incited other students of foreign descent who were in attendance at the institution to present tableaux and scenes depicting the national life of their fathers and mothers. In other words, The Little Country Theatre served as a sociological force in bringing out the different forms of social recreation of the national life of the foreign elements who reside in the state of North Dakota. Four other young people presented *Sam Average*, a short play by that well-known dramatist, Percy MacKaye, which was very well done. Numerous other incidents might be cited to show the actual work which is really being accomplished in The Little Country Theatre.

Preceding the plays, the folk dances of different nations are given. In all the plays presented the young men and women who take an active part are

required to do their own "make-up" work and costuming. If a sitting room scene is to be arranged on the stage, the young ladies in the cast arrange it. The young men always set the scenery, attend to the lighting effects, raise and lower the curtain and look after the properties. In fact, everything possible is done to give them sufficient training in the production of the plays so that when they go back into their home communities they will possess ample information to know how to get up a home talent play and do everything that goes with it.

The influence of The Little Country Theatre in the state as well as in the nation has been far-reaching. Scarcely a day passes but that somebody writes asking for information in regard to it. Today, for example, there are a dozen requests on my desk for copies of plays as well as inquiries on how to stage plays. These requests usually tell something interesting about the social condition in the community. In North Dakota at present between fifteen hundred and two thousand people are participating in home talent plays, due primarily to the influence of The Little Country Theatre. The requests come from every section of the state. The people seem to have caught the spirit of The Little Country Theatre idea. They realize that something fundamental must be done to satisfy their intense hunger for social recreation. During the last year one thousand five hundred and ninety-two pieces of play matter have been loaned to individuals, literary societies, civic clubs and organizations. Of the different requests received from hundreds of people one is especially worthy of mention here. A country school teacher in the northern part of the state sent for several copies of plays and play catalogues. None of the plays suited her. She decided to give an original

play, *The Comedy*, written by one of her friends. She wanted to carry The Little Country Theatre idea out in the community. When asked for a description of the staging of the original production, she sent me the following letter, which is indicative of what people really can do in the country to find themselves. I shall quote only a part of the letter: "When I wrote you about 'The Comedy,' I do not know what idea I gave you of it; perhaps not a very true one, so I am sending you a copy. The little German song is one I learned from a Victrola record, so the music may not be correct, but with a little originality can be used. This little play has the quality of making the people expect something extraordinary, but when performed the parts are funny but still not funny enough to produce 'a roar.' They are remembered and spoken of long afterwards. Now, around here we often hear parts spoken of. I enjoyed the training of the young people and they were quite successful. I have found that every place I go people in the country enjoy the school programs very much and speak of them often. We wanted to take some pictures but could not. The weather was so cloudy before and afterward that we could not take any, but may this Sunday afternoon. I wish I knew just what to write about or just what you wish to know. I like our arrangement of lights. We only had lanterns. A dressing room was curtained off and the rest of the space clear. We hung four lanterns in a row, one below the other and had one standing on the floor at the side opposite from the dressing room, and then one on the floor and one held by the man who pulled the curtain on the other side. This gave splendid light. There was no light near the audience except at the organ."

The spirit of The Little Country Theatre is con-

tagious. An alert and aggressive young man from the northern part of the state who witnessed several productions in the theatre last winter was instrumental in staging a home talent play in the empty hay loft of a large barn last summer. The stage was made of old barn floor planks. The draw curtain was made of white cloth. Ten barn lanterns, hung on a piece of fence wire, furnished the border lights. Branches of trees were used for a back ground on the stage. Planks resting on old boxes and saw horses were used for seats. A Victrola machine served as an orchestra. About a hundred and fifty people were in attendance at the play and were more than satisfied with it. The proceeds were given to a country baseball club. A physician who recently settled in a small community in the Philippine Islands is actively engaged during his spare moments in working out The Little Country Theatre idea. Several residents of Porto Rico are doing likewise. Scores of country districts in the east and west, north and south, have inquired into its feasibility and many are carrying out the plan.

Just recently the village of Amenia, North Dakota, opened up The Amenia Little Country Theatre. It is located on the second floor up over a country store and has a seating capacity of about one hundred and seventy-five. The stage is small. Screens covered with brown burlap are used for scenery. The curtain is a draw curtain. It was my good fortune to be present at the opening of this institution and witness the production of an excellent three-act comedy. Standing room was at a premium. The histrionic talent displayed by the community Thespians was remarkable. Everybody enjoyed the affair.

About a month ago several young men and women

from different sections of the state staged an original one-act play called *The Prairie Wolf*. It was written by a young man named John Lange. They did practically all their own rehearsing. The play was produced in The Little Country Theatre and was a tremendous success. Twenty different communities have already asked for permission to present it. The action in the play was superb.

To supply an ever-increasing demand for suggestions on plays and pageants is a huge task, though the work is interesting.

While the work of The Little Country Theatre is still in its infancy it has infinite possibilities. If it can inspire people in the country districts and small communities who are dissatisfied with their surroundings, who are lonely and have little ambition in life, to do the bigger things in life—to get along with each other in order that they may find themselves—it will have performed a service which will be invaluable to mankind. It is not until the country people themselves can be taught to appreciate their surroundings and to realize that there are tongues in trees, books in running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything that we will have a healthy civilization in America. God's gardens are in the country. The country people are the sinews of society.

The drama is a medium through which America is coming to express its highest form of democracy. It must be considered more in a sociological sense, however, than in a literary and an art sense. When it can be used as an instrument to get people to interpret themselves in order that they may build up a bigger and better community life, it will then have performed a real service to society. When the people who live in the small community and the

country awaken to the infinite possibilities which lie hidden in themselves through the impulse of a vitalized drama they will be less eager to move to centers of population. The question of unemployment will no longer puzzle the cities. The moral tone of the country will be improved and loneliness will cease to be a cause of insanity. The monotony of their existence will change them into a newer and broader life. Then the lure of the city will be a thing of the past. To help people find themselves and their true expression in a community is the great idea back of The Little Country Theatre. It will serve as a sociological experiment station. Every day its vision grows bigger. In years to come, if the idea is thoroughly carried out, there will be more contented farm communities in the state of North Dakota because the people will have found their true expression in the community. As a dynamic force in spreading the gospel of social recreation among people who reside in this and other states its worth can never be computed. The social life which will eventually be built up around the community will be one characteristic of the inhabitants of that community. It can be nothing else.

ALFRED ARVOLD.

THE FOLLY OF THEATRICAL ADVERTISING.



THE great store decides to advertise lingerie, corsets and willow furniture on Wednesday. The buyers of the lingerie, corsets and furniture departments are notified to appear at the office of the merchandise man—adjoining the office of the advertising man—on Monday. At noon precisely the buyer of the lingerie appears, her arms heaped with those dainty, exquisite articles so mysterious and bewildering to the average man, so dearly beloved of the average woman. But to the eye of the merchandise man these fluffy bits of lace and ribbon are not mysterious; his is the duty of rebuking the buyer if she has paid too much for them or has been fooled by clever imitations. The advertising woman (or man) joins the merchandise man, and together they go carefully over the goods heaped before them on the huge table, testing, disputing and sometimes sending shoppers out to other stores to prove the relative value of bargains. In some stores the responsibility is left solely with the advertising man, but it is safe to say that not an advertisement is worded, the truth of which is not vouched for—so far as experience coupled with a sincere desire to tell the truth can go.

There we have the up-to-date method of the up-to-date store which spends many thousands in an attempt to attract customers through the daily papers. Let us take a look at the methods of the up-to-date theatre, also spending many thousands to attract customers through the daily papers.

About a year ago a great play came to New York, greatly acted, but being somewhat sombre in theme (though shot through with delightful humor) it did not succeed. Its significance as life and as literature was recognized by The Drama League, and a few devotees of the drama threw themselves enthusiastically into an effort to bring the play back for another hearing. Its audiences had grown slowly from the very first, but, since it was obviously not the play to make a sensational hit the first few days, the edict had gone forth from a manager of little faith, "*Off with its head!*"

At last, by strenuous effort, and in the teeth of many doubting Thomases, we did get the play back to New York, and a handful of earnest men and women consecrated themselves to the task of nursing it tenderly to a normal and care-free existence. What was our surprise and chagrin to take up the papers and read:

*"Coming Back! Coming Back! Coming Back!
The Great Broadway Success!"*

Now frankly, it is not on moral grounds that I attack this procedure (though Heaven knows there is justification!) but because of its colossal stupidity. It was an error that worked both ways: the little band of workers had not sacrificed time and money to boost a "Great Broadway Success," neither was it the play to please the kind of audience that conceivably would be lured to the theatre by that much over-used slogan! Here, then, palpably, money was being expended with the absolute certainty that, if it succeeded in accomplishing anything at all, it would not be a crop of friends, but a crop of enemies—people who had been hoodwinked into seeing a play which by no possible chance could have interested them.

Here was a unique opportunity for circularizing—a method which on the whole is less costly and may be made more effective than space in the newspapers. Here was an opportunity to reach out and gather into the theatre men and women who have been more or less disgruntled and led away from it; men and women who had lost the habit of theatre-going. Here were writers, educators, a number of disinterested persons, working for a play with no other possible reward than the consciousness of serving Art. Here was—through the efforts of these workers—a great conservative university breaking a cast-iron tradition and actually setting the stamp of its approval on a play by a living author. Here was a special university night arranged, with commendations from well-known writers, from professors and from the President of the university himself, and all the publicity man could think of saying was:

*"Coming Back! Coming Back! Coming Back!
The Great Broadway Success!"*

But to circularize rightly requires intelligence of a high order—and it pre-supposes some knowledge of human nature. Some goods are circularized with a cleverness that is fairly uncanny. I am thinking of some books and almost all patent medicines. These pursue the intended victim with a follow-up system which possesses all the wiles of the serpent and the tenacity of the bulldog. But has anyone ever seen any intelligence displayed in the circularization of plays? Is there any carefully planned attack directed at your weakest spot? Any sly undermining of your will? Is your dollar wooed from you with artistic skill? No. The only sort of circularizing that seems to come within the ken of the theatrical man is that which asks ministers to stand sponsor

to all dull plays, and suffragettes to all unpleasant ones.

In all up-to-date commercial advertising offices, there is an efficiency chart which shows the general lay of the land.—For instance, it is considered somewhat wasteful to advertise porcelain-lined tubs in a region where the plumber has not penetrated, to sing the praises of carpet-sweepers where the scrubbing brush is in the ascendant, or to advise shingle stains where all the houses are made of concrete bricks.

I see no reason why such an efficiency chart should not be of great usefulness in the theatrical world—it would prevent circularizing a peace play to a member of the Army Reserve, or a play of the tenelements to those whose one joy is to watch, or fancy it watches, the raiment and revels of the four hundred! After all—if one only knew how to reach it—there is undoubtedly an audience for every play and the problem as to how to bring the playless audience to the audienceless play has something of the fascination of the eternal problem of bringing the manless job to the jobless man.

Now to the advertiser, next in importance to knowing what audience he wants and then going out and getting it, is the vital principle that in advertising the profits are made from the *returning* buyer. The significance of that principle cannot be overestimated. It means that successful advertising does not consist in buncoing a person into a single purchase, but in so satisfying that person that he or she comes back again and again. *It is from the returning buyer the profits come.* Can anything be more utterly against the principles of theatrical advertising which, so far as I can make out, practically are made up of the cheerful philosophy, "Sufficient

for the day is the audience thereof"? The typical theatrical advertiser acts for all the world as if each audience that is lured to the theatre enters into a kind of lethal chamber from which there is no return. Of course if at the end of the last act each purchaser of a ticket meets with a speedy death which prevents him from spreading the truth, there is no harm done; "DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES!" Walter Dill Scott in his admirable book, *The Psychology of Advertising*, says the one function of advertising is the influencing of human minds. Now, of course, if there were an unlimited supply of human minds to be influenced, each for one day only, then the cumulative effect of all their disappointments, their discouragements and disillusionments need not be considered. But I think that very much of the present chaos and uncertainty in the theatrical situation has been brought about because the supply of human minds is not unlimited and the methods employed have been—shall we say, somewhat extravagant?

Less than a year ago there was held in Toronto the first international gathering of advertising men. The Associated Advertising Clubs of America, representing 128 clubs with over 12,000 members, got up the meeting and then and there they placed themselves on record that the old maxim "Caveat Empor," "let the buyer beware," has been outgrown. Gradually it has come to be realized that after all it is not the buyer who should beware, but the seller. It is the seller who has most at stake; it is the seller who must "watch out" that his goods do not deteriorate, or that they are not undersold by a clever competitor. In short, it is the satisfied buyer out of whom must come the profits. We have just seen how careful are the great mercantile houses to verify the truth of their advertisements. We have

seen that to be the head of the advertising department in a great store, it is not enough to be a facile adjective slinger, but that one must really be an expert in values.

After all, why not? The advertising clubs have taken as their emblem the map of North and South America with the word "*truth*" emblazoned across it. "Success" has been called "the science of being believed," and in the world of advertising this holds doubly, trebly true. The attitude of theatrical advertisers is childlike; I can think of no other term that suits it so well. A child seizes upon its first lie in an ecstasy of personal discovery. What an easy way of escaping from unpleasant consequences! Why didn't anyone ever think of it before? Of course, experience licks it into the child that ultimate attempts are not accompanied with such happy results! It is easy to keep on lying, but it is not so easy to keep on being believed. When you come to think of it the working usefulness of a lie is largely impaired when it is under suspicion.

There is another disadvantage of a lie; the other fellow can always outlie you. It may have been an inspiration to have advertised your play as "the best show in New York," but next week another show is advertised as "the best show of the whole season." Then comes "the best show of the past ten years," then "for a generation," then "the best on the western continent"; finally "the greatest and best show in the whole wide world." And, while it seems difficult to believe, I have seen a play (a very indifferent one, of course) announced as "the best play since the dawn of history!" A little matter like passing over the claims of Sophocles, Euripides and Shakespeare wouldn't bother a copy-writer like that!

It might have been quite a clever touch to advertise a certain play as "the play with a punch," but the other day right under it I saw of another play (not nearly so good a one), "not a play with a punch but a wallop." Perhaps in such a wilderness of superlatives the most effective advertisements may after all prove to be the quiet, dignified announcements of Mr. Winthrop Ames and Mr. Granville Barker. Just as in the glare of the Great Flashway, may it not be that the end is already in sight and that—in order at all costs to attain some distinguishing feature—the next step will have to be an extinguishing one—a restful space of cool darkness becoming the only way of attracting attention amidst the orgy of blinking, twinkling lights?

For some time, I have devoured the advertisements in the Sunday papers—as I used to read the tales of Baron Munchausen; I have quite a picturesque record. One mediocre play boasts of the

"Most suspense,"

"Most romance,"

"Most mystery,"

"Most thrills."

War Brides may be a good play (I have not seen it), but is it necessary to say "the heroine shames the women of Ibsen and Shakespeare"?

Of late, language having done its worst, there has been a tendency towards an appeal to the eye—advertisements appearing framed in fancy borders, circles, stars, triangle, all sorts of queer shapes, including the sole of a stocking! The most objectionable device this winter was used to bolster up a wretched failure: references to it bobbed up all over the advertising page, sandwiched between lines on other plays. "More thrilling than the *Servant in the House*," ran one; "more absorbing than *The*

Third Floor Back," another; again "more spiritually appealing than *Everywoman*," and below the announcement of Ruth Chatterton's little play: "It makes the same appeal as *Daddy Long Legs* and should have as long a run." I am glad to say this buccaneering attempt to succeed with borrowed plumes failed as it was bound to do. It must have cost the management a pretty penny—that is one comfort!

In the desperate attempt to emerge from all this helter-skelter, I take off my hat to the promoters of *Polygamy*. They had the courage to leave the theatrical page, and in quite an unexpected quarter appeared a cut of a good-looking chap with the caption, "To-night's *Polygamy*! Hey, Bill!" But what interested me most among the excellent reasons they have for applauding Bill's choice was the startling statement that it was "the only guaranteed play in New York!" "If you don't like it, stop at the box office on your way out and get all your money back." It took considerable courage to guarantee a play as one guarantees fast colors! I can fancy it might lead to some complications though! To begin with, a full house would really mean nothing—at least until the lights were really out and all danger of a descent upon the box office over. No longer could a manager chortle at the sign *S. R. O.*, "standing room only," for too soon it might be changed to *P. D.*, "Please disgorge!"

There is another kind of lying advertisement largely indulged in by the theatrical man—the poster, got up with a noble design to attract without the slightest relation to the advertised object. In one Southern town this winter all the store windows were decorated with a picture of an ardent and adventurous pair of lovers perilously perched

upon the branch of a tree, their figures silhouetted against a full moon. In some inscrutable way this poster was used to advertise the farce—*A Pair of Sixes*. I don't know just what was in the artist's mind. For all I know he may have been a great psychologist. There is a school of advertisers that insists that the purpose of an advertisement is not so much to proclaim the advantages of certain goods as to put you into the mood to spend money. It may be that looking at a couple of young lovers perched on the branch of a tree is conducive to the opening of some people's purse-strings, but I should think the best psychology would be that which would attract the kind of audience to which the kind of play, *A Pair of Sixes*, would appeal. If anyone went there expecting a sentimental love story, he was certainly disappointed. And, *per contra*, I fancy there were some men in that town who would have gone and enjoyed it had they been attracted by a sight of the actual poker hand which did the deed.

Again, I went to see a play last summer in a little Connecticut town and all through the performance I was waiting, my attention a good deal distracted, for a certain scene to take place, a scene which had been most luridly depicted in a highly colored poster which had enlivened the store windows for the previous few weeks. I waited in vain. Nothing approaching the poster ever appeared. The artist had gathered together some telling phrase and a tense situation and made an effective poster. There was some photographic accuracy in the costumes, and the title and date were correct, but otherwise the poster might as well have been used in advertising the charm of pork and beans.

There was a situation very much like this, about

twenty years ago, in the publishing business, when every work of fiction was heralded as the great American novel, when every publisher's gosling was a swan. There was an eruption of frantic book advertising extending over perhaps half a dozen years. It could not last because the publishers, being men of intelligence, realized that that sort of thing must stop,—that the public, instead of being attracted, was only being repelled. Since then, one notices, books are not always by the "American Dickens," or the "Kipling of the Western Continent"; their birth is announced quietly with later on, perhaps, just a line or two from some favorable critic.

I claim that it is high time something like this is begun for the theatre. I am glad to say there is evidence that the high ideals and intelligence of the leading commercial advertisers are beginning to filter through to the theatrical men. Already I am told of one important manager who sends out a great many companies through the country—I'll say this much, his headquarters are not in New York—who has given the most explicit instructions to his publicity men to say nothing that is not strictly true. No longer is it to be permitted—at least by his representatives—to say a production comes straight from New York with the same cast, unless it does; and no play is to be announced as having run in New York for a year, after a precarious existence of six weeks. I know at least one Eastern city where this manager has met with tremendous enthusiasm and the backing that always may be counted on when one delivers "straight goods."

The Associated Advertising Clubs is behind an earnest movement to make misrepresenting in advertising a misdemeanor. Already nineteen states have put this upon their statute books. It might be inter-

esting and quite pregnant of good results if some enterprising person would arise and make a test case of some of the alluring statements made by some managerial Munchausens.

We Americans have received great credit for having led the movement all over the world for ethical advertising (I really prefer to call it intelligent advertising, for that is what it is), and at the international convention of advertising men, this was dwelt upon. I like to think that we have a distinct contribution of this kind to make to advertising of the theatre, for when all is said and done, we cannot feel that the influence of America on the stage in other directions has been wholly and indisputably for the good.

ANNIE NATHAN MEYER.

EUGENE WALTER: AN AMERICAN DRAMATIC REALIST.



THE American Pinero is the phrase employed by Walter Prichard Eaton in his book, *At the New Theatre and Others*, in referring to Eugene Walter, and he describes him further as "perhaps the most brilliant, certainly the most forceful" of the younger American playwrights: "an author who possesses ideas and an uncompromising, almost brutal passion for truth." One of our American novelists, upon his return from Europe recently, spoke in slighting terms of the American drama but made an exception in the case of Mr. Walter, whose work, he said, was comparable to that of Henri Becque in France.

On the basis of his work in *The Easiest Way*, Professor Richard Burton calls him "in every sense a leader," and speaks of his doing, in portions of his plays, "the kind of thing which George Gissing did so well in fiction." Charlton Andrews attributes to Mr. Walter the qualities of "simplicity, concentration, and searching analysis." Certain of his plays have had successful representations in England, and one of them has, for a brief period, penetrated to the Continent. It is therefore evident, despite undeniable limitations, that the American theatre has in Mr. Walter a dramatist of authority, conscientious craftsmanship, and a virile, realistic kind of distinction.

Persons who admire the drama of contemporary

Europe often assume a contemptuous attitude toward our own playwrights because of their failure to deal with similarly deep and moving problems of personality and life. But is this not, in some instances at least, a mistaken point of view? A difference in mood and subject does not necessarily mean less adequate or able handling. The American people are, for the most part, indifferent to the subtle questionings of the morbidly overwrought. Our nervous tension points another way. It inclines us toward a material conquering and accumulation. We like to think in terms of tangible things. Is it not, therefore, in strict accordance with our national temperament that Mr. Cohan should write the comedy of covered carpet-tacks, and that Mr. Walter should write the tragedy of defective cement?

Mr. Walter's dramas have a special pertinence to our American social conditions today. One feels in them the proximity, constant and provocative, of a normally unattainable wealth. His satirical shafts are aimed at commercialization of ideals, and at those manners and methods by which the great driving impulse of industrial achievement has been coarsened or debased. The unsettlement of standards which accompanies the flux of a transition period is conveyed with mordant accuracy in more than one passage of Mr. Walter's social plays.

These plays are concerned with practical matters. They progress, not infrequently, through petty (even sordid) incidents. The figures that move through them are the underpaid and harried clerk; the winsome, incompetent actress; the wife, irritated by household drudgery, oppressed by suburban loneliness; the woman who works on, doggedly, pertinaciously, in the midst of the drifting grime of smoke-

stacks, of the odors of cheap food, of distraught and pillow-beating nights.

The discontent of a family is expressed by the picture of a husband wiping the dishes in a tiny flat—and breaking a dish. The failing effort of a girl to maintain her spiritual integrity is shown, very vividly, by the opening of a box of crackers, the taking-in of milk from the window-ledge outside. And the catastrophe of *Fine Feathers* springs, in the final reckoning, from the red hat: the intrinsically harmless, captivating luxury that the wife could not resist.

These people in Mr. Walter's plays are agitated by the restlessness of modern life. They chafe under the restraints and exactions which seem, so relentlessly, to be imposed upon them from without. Their unsatisfied (perhaps only half-acknowledged) instincts urge them toward a more eager, colorful existence. With impatient earnestness, and a little blindly and confusedly, they struggle to emerge from the "ruck" to gain for themselves "a place in the sun."

Mr. Walter's most recent play, *Just a Woman*, though it manifests disturbing defects which may be indicated later, contains much that is notable. It marks, in any event, an advance in the direction of idealism. It is a largely-conceived and efficiently-executed work.

The author describes this play quite frankly as "a modern melodrama concerning a phase of American life." He thus disarms in advance the criticism that the treatment of *Just a Woman* is, in the main, determined rather by the exigencies of effective situation than by the more intricate elements of character. Mr. Clayton Hamilton has pointed out that melodrama, when discreetly and deftly done, is

not only enjoyable, but an altogether legitimate branch of the dramatic art. Our American melodrama has, in recent years, become increasingly plausible, judicious, and—thrilling. Into it there has crept, somewhat crudely and hesitantly, but with encouraging insistence, the *social note*: the sense of society's inequalities and maladjustments as the source of personal collisions and personal crises.

This conception, accepted by Mr. Veiller in the first act of *Within the Law* but almost abandoned in the subsequent action, dominates and vivifies Mr. Walter's play. It may justly be called a *social* melodrama. In it there is the contrast of two worlds. The one is the blackened, sweltering, demoniac labor-world of the steel-mills: superbly, flamingly creative, yet with an agonizing power to maim and to consume; ruthless, a trifle monstrous; a place of callous silence, and hoarse crying-out in strange tongues, and the passing, over deadened sensibilities, of racking, desperate days.

On the other hand, the playwright shows us the hedonistic world of Broadway night-life, with its pleasures for the rich and brash, its flimsiness, its hectic tawdriness, its exotic (in this case parasitic) people, so curiously devoid of human sympathy and soul.

This, surely, is the material of social drama. And Mr. Walter has handled it boldly. From the one phase of life to the other—and nearly (not quite) back again—he sends the Man of his play: the steel millionaire who was “just a mill-hand,” after all. We see this man grown arrogant with success—blustering, giddy, and unfeeling. We follow his jarring plunge into a maze of faithlessness and degradation. And in this, one recognizes the distinctive Walter touch: the tracing of a progressive disintegration.

of character under the influence of environment. The crumbling and twisting of spiritual fibre through the pressure of temptation, necessity, or stifled impulse: this is the theme, the variations of which form the most significant feature of Mr. Walter's work.

But in *Just a Woman* the faltering, self-centered man is offset, is splendidly vanquished and chastened, by the spirit of the wife. In her we see a caustic realist's idea of the eternal womanly. One feels convinced that the drawing of this portrait was the result, in part at least, of the dramatist's determination to refute the objections concerning the negative and dispiriting tendencies of many of the characters whom he has hitherto chosen to depict.

Arthur Ruhl, in his recent book *Second Nights*, speaks of Mr. Walter's "rasping voice" and refers to him as belonging to the "no-quarter school." Joe Brooks, in *Paid in Full*, is a quite irredeemable cad; his despicable qualities energize the play. Laura Murdock, of *The Easiest Way*, is a creature of sapped will, whose pathetic destiny arises from a too facile yielding to the requirements of the moment, a tragic inability to cope in any spirited fashion with the buffetings of chance. And in *Fine Feathers* the young chemist, Reynolds, assailed on the one side by business sophistries and on the other by domestic friction, becomes an instrument of the unscrupulous, a febrile recreant to vital trust, tottering clumsily toward inextricable collapse and impossibility of life. Painfully futile and disquieting is the attempt of this man to "do a wrong and get away with it", to "save his soul and to please his wife."

The wife in *Just a Woman* is a different sort of person. Anna Stanley is a woman of definite and

resolute idealism. She radiates that dynamic optimism which is interior, of the mind and heart. A leaping, unquenchable ambition is hers; a calm, undeviating perseverance; a sunniness that means understanding. Mr. Walter has never before created so wholly ingratiating a figure as this wholesome, sensitive woman. A "plain woman," to be sure, but with a capacity for evoking and stimulating the things that make for good.

It is near Pittsburgh that we meet her first. The hillsides are brown and barren. The things that meet the eye are smutched with soot. At the right is a shack—a table set upon the porch: the boarding-house the Man and the Woman keep. In the depression below are the mills, the mills that overshadow so utterly, that expend so inexorably, the lives of the workmen who in them earn their bread.

"Ten years is a long time in the mills." It is the shrill cry of the Kaschensky woman, whose menfolk have been sacrificed to Steel.

In the gathering dusk the great black chimneys glow at their tops with spouting fire. Mills after mills—they fill the background. As the night deepens, their patchwork windows blaze, a greenish-silver glare that speaks of the molten torments, the fulgurant prodigies within. The clash of metal on metal, a staccato hammering, is heard. Musical, distant whistles blow. A darker hue mounts in the valley and envelops the buildings, and along the sky, beyond the iron hills that face us, is flung a spreading stain of red. It is an essentially American setting, a typical example of Mr. Walter's craft.

Up from below come trooping the "hunkies." They are intent on the removing of dirt, the satisfaction of hunger. But among them is a Polish boy who sings—lyrical, guttural songs of his native land.

And it is from him that fortune comes for the Bavarian woman of the boarding-house and the pots and pans and the quick, comprehending smile.

The Polish boy has devised a process to cheapen and render easier the making of steel. Into the exploitation of this invention the man and woman of the boarding-house put the money which, by work and privation, they have saved. The venture brings wealth. There is a sudden rise into the domain of ease and millions. The character of the woman is unchanged, save that it is enriched by the joy that comes into her life with the birth of a son.

But the man is of less stable mould. Prosperity shakes and opportunity upsets his moral balance. They bring a shattering of restraints, a drifting into selfish indulgence. And the woman knows why this is. When the man was a puddler in the mills, it was necessary that money should be saved. Part of it was saved by a denial to the husband of the privilege of drink. Forcibly, almost, the woman broke this habit. She brought him home "from Mahoney's saloon."

He would cast her aside now. He imagines that he towers above her. Her old-fashioned, simple humanity is distasteful to him. He forsakes her for a woman of the musical pieces. But the wife looks upon his conduct neither with morbidity nor with anger. She understands. What is suppressed at one time will find an outlet at another. Latent inclinations will not be cheated. To her, the man is not himself; he is spiritually ill. To the woman of the half-world she says: "You are not important; if it were not you, it would be another." Anna Stanley does not believe in divorce. She was born in that Old World where, when the men go from their homes (to war, to death, who knows?) the women

wait. And she, in her modestly reliant way, will "stick, and stick, and stick." She will bring Jim back to her—back "from Mahoney's saloon."

Her deeply reasoned persistence accomplishes its end. She is a victim of conspiracy, of perjury. She experiences the most poignant abasement. But she holds fast; she knows the truth; she "sticks." Suit for divorce is brought against her. But, in a striking scene, the accusations are disproved. The pretensions of the man are crushed. Prison awaits him, and regeneration through adversity. Years later, at the woman's little home above the steel works, Mr. Walter brings Stanley and his wife together again. The things that have passed are gently forgotten. Jim, after all, is "her man."

Mr. Walter's court-room scene in *Just a Woman* is not only a model of naturalism, but a singularly adroit instance of dramatic power and technique. Its interest is cumulative; there is a steadily ascending emotional force. And at the conclusion of the act there is a telling exemplification of effective surprise. To more or less hackneyed material the playwright gives an unexpected turn.

The author's best work, however, in this new play is done in the first act, the steel-mills scene. The two scenes of the second act, in which is portrayed the widening and finally almost impassible breach between man and wife, by no means equal the mark set by his previous work. The material in these two acts is not particularly novel, and the treatment, while consistently capable and "gripping," is not such as to justify any assertion of conspicuous originality. In order to set forth his ample, changeful story (a story grandiose in the good sense of that word), Mr. Walter has been obliged to adopt broad and somewhat summary types of action and

characterization. We miss the illuminating detail, the pungent manipulation of incident, which were a part of *The Easiest Way*.

One feels, in addition, a distinct variance of mood between the first and the succeeding acts, a sense that to this exposition of industrial stress and fermentation is arbitrarily (shall we say illogically?) linked the melodramatic action which ensues. One must confess to a slight impatience with the playwright for having chosen the melodramatic form at all. This feeling is strengthened even by the courtroom scene. For this scene, masterly as it is in itself, is not imperative in the development of the theme. It is true that it provides an illustration of the fortitude, astuteness, and self-immolation of the wife, yet it can scarcely be regarded as *inevitable*.

It is difficult to escape the impression that this is an instance of a dramatist so in love with his craft, so certain of proficiency and skill, that he is here exhibiting his technical dexterity for its own sake, as an end rather than a means. But the writing throughout this act is strong and characteristic. In fact, by its sheer command of theatric resource, it stands out with such vigor and definition as to subject the tranquil epilogue which follows it to the danger of anti-climax.

All things considered, *Just a Woman* is the least harmonious and closely-knit of Mr. Walter's works. Its most admirable quality is the sympathetic insight which the author shows, into the lives and thoughts of the foreign-born workers in the great American industries. The Polack boy and the Bohemian coachman are memorable figures. An entire drama confined to the *locale* and animated by the intention of the first act in *Just a Woman* would be a signal contribution to the American theatre.

Mr. Walter is, preëminently, a dramatist of urban life. In the cities there is an intimacy of association, a diversity of character, which is bound to furnish the raw material of drama. Susceptibilities and passions are apt to be on edge. In *Paid in Full*, for example, there comes across the footlights a clear perception of the confinement, the repressed desires, which may be said, in a very real sense, to generate the conflicts of the play. All the scenes are interiors. From their "stuffiness" one imagines very readily the hot roofs above, the hot pavements below. It is down the fire-escape that Jimsy Smith goes on his way to buy cigars.

But however restricted the actual sphere of his plays may be, Mr. Walter usually contrives to suggest through them a certain spaciousness of background. *Paid in Full* again comes to mind. Its action passes in three cramped rooms; but for its background it has Leadville and its "epic of the West," the sun-scorched coasts of Latin America, and the wide wastes of the Pacific. In the third act of this play, in the den of Captain Williams, the author strikes his single note of exotic romance. Into the atmosphere of a humdrum, slippered Harlem evening there are projected the visible evidences of a lawless, semi-piratical past.

Mr. Walter makes no concessions to the alleged demand for "happy endings." His endings are the plainly-indicated outgrowth of the situations which have led up to them. The "conclusions" of two of his plays are inconclusive: that of *The Easiest Way* is poignantly so. The action is not terminated; it is merely arrested—stopped at a moment of acute crisis. The curtain of the final act is lowered as the weak and wretched girl is on the verge of an hysterical rush into more lurid, more unhallowed depths.

It is hardly necessary to say here that *The Easiest Way* is the most expert and distinguished of American realistic dramas. "An acrid masterpiece" is what William Archer called *Mid-Channel*, and this phrase is in no way inapplicable to Mr. Walter's piece. And it is the greater because, as Mr. Eaton has said of another of the Walter plays, its purpose is attained "through the medium of action and character, not by spouting a thesis." The dramatist presented a cross-section of life, and made apparent its beauty and suffering and incongruity. (One may remark in passing that the biting wit of Elfie St. Clair and the mellow humor of the old "advance man" are not soon forgotten.) The author made only an indirect comment. He did not preach; he *showed*.

Mr. Walter is excelled by no American playwright in the ability to create enthralling situations; and it is worthy of note that these situations are, almost invariably, relevant: not introduced through any *tour de force*, but having a direct bearing on the controlling theme. One of the simplest of these is in *The Easiest Way*. Laura Murdock is penniless, and in distress. She takes her lover's picture from its hiding-place and looks at it. Shaken by a paroxysm of sobs, she casts herself upon the bed. Then, through the thin wall from the next room, comes the noise of a phonograph—brassy, impudent, bawling forth one of the strident, meretricious songs of the Tenderloin. The scene is over in a moment, and not a word has been spoken. But it has arrayed the two forces that are fighting for mastery in the soul of this girl. It has explained the tragedy.

Toward the end of this play there is another instance. Despite his suspicion, the girl's protestations have carried partial conviction to her lover's

mind. By pleadings, by falsehoods, she has restored in a measure his confidence in her. She has won. She is jubilant. She will reach at last an unimpeded, nobler life. But, in a momentary lull, there is the sound of a key in the lock, a sharp, metallic rattle. This key is in the broker's hand, and it needs no explanation. For Laura Murdock it means a calamity swift and irrevocable. Again the action is silent. From exaltation to black despair—by the turning of a key!

Of the basic sincerity of Mr. Walter's work there can be no question. He deals vigorously with fundamental American problems. His plays always "bite." They are the work of a man who knows contemporary life and has thought keenly about it. "At present," writes Professor Burton, "one watches Mr. Walter with both hope and fear." But surely, after the first act of *Just a Woman*, hope should be dominant.

FRANCIS LAMONT PEIRCE.

MR. JAMES JOYCE AND THE MODERN STAGE.

A PLAY AND SOME CONSIDERATIONS.



WO months ago I set out to write an essay about a seventeenth century dramatist. As I had nearly finished translating one of his plays into English, my interest in him must have been more than that of a transient moment. His own life was full of adventure. The play had a number of virtues that one could quite nicely mark out on a diagram. It was altogether a most estimable "subject"; yet, when I began to ask myself whether my phrases really corresponded to fact, whether it was worth while causing a few readers to spend their time on the matter, I was convinced that it was not. I believed that old play and the author had fallen into desuetude from perfectly justifiable causes. I agreed to let the dead bury their dead, and to let other people write about the drama, and I returned to some original work of my own.

Last week I received a play by Mr. James Joyce and that argumentative interest, which once led me to spend two years of my life reading almost nothing but plays, came back upon me, along with a set of questions "from the bottom up": Is drama worth while? Is the drama of today, or the stage of today, a form or medium by which the best contemporary authors can express themselves in any satisfactory manner?

Mr. Joyce is undoubtedly one of our best contemporary authors. He has written a novel, and I am quite ready to stake anything I have in this world that that novel is permanent. It is permanent as are the works of Stendhal and Flaubert. Two silly publishers have just refused it in favor of froth, another declines to look at it because "he will not deal through an agent"—yet Mr. Joyce lives on the continent and can scarcely be expected to look after his affairs in England save through a deputy. And Mr. Joyce is the best prose writer of my generation, in English. So far as I know, there is no one better in either Paris or Russia. In English we have Hardy and Henry James and, chronologically, we have Mr. James Joyce. The intervening novelists print books, it is true, but for me or for any man of my erudition, for any man living at my intensity, these books are things of no substance.

Therefore, when Mr. Joyce writes a play, I consider it a reasonable matter of interest. The English agent of the Oliver Morosco company has refused the play, and in so doing the agent has well served her employers, for the play would certainly be of no use to the syndicate that stars *Peg o' My Heart*; neither do I believe that any manager would stage it nor that it could succeed were it staged. Nevertheless, I read it through at a sitting, with intense interest. It is a long play, some one hundred and eighty pages.

It is not so good as a novel; nevertheless it is quite good enough to form a very solid basis for my arraignment of the contemporary theatre. It lays before me certain facts, certain questions; for instance, are the excellences of this play purely novelist's excellences? Perhaps most of them are; yet this play could not have been made as a novel. It

is distinctly a play. It has the form of a play—I do not mean that it is written in dialogue with the names of the speakers put in front of their speeches. I mean that it has inner form; that the acts and speeches of one person work into the acts and speeches of another and make the play into an indivisible, integral whole. The action takes place in less than twenty-four hours, in two rooms, both near Dublin, so that even the classical unities are uninjured. The characters are drawn with that hardness of outline which we might compare to that of Dürer's painting if we are permitted a comparison with effects of an art so different. There are only four main characters, two subsidiary characters, and a fishwoman who passes a window, so that the whole mechanics of the play have required great closeness of skill. I see no way in which the play could be improved by redoing it as a novel. It could not, in fact, be anything but a play. And yet it is absolutely unfit for the stage as we know it. It is dramatic. Strong, well-wrought sentences flash from the speech and give it "dramatic-edge" such as we have in Ibsen, when some character comes out with, "There is no mediator between God and man"; I mean sentences dealing with fundamentals.

It is not unstageable because it deals with adultery; surely, we have plenty of plays, quite stageable plays, that deal with adultery. I have seen it in the nickel-plush theatre done with the last degree of sentimental bestiality. I admit that Mr. Joyce once mentions a garter, but it is done in such a way . . . it is done in the only way . . . it is the only possible means of presenting the exact social tone of at least two of the characters.

"Her place in life was rich and poor between," as Crabbe says of his Clelia; it might have been

done in a skit of a night club and no harm thought; but it is precisely because it occurs neither in fast nor in patrician circles, but in a milieu of Dublin genteelness, that it causes a certain feeling of constraint. Mr. Joyce gives his Dublin as Ibsen gave provincial Norway.

Of course, oh, of course, if, if there were an Ibsen stage in full blast, Mr. Joyce's play would go on at once.

But we get only trivialized Ibsen; we get Mr. Shaw, ✓ the intellectual cheese-mite. That is to say, Ibsen was a true agonist, struggling with very real problems. "Life is a combat with the phantoms of the mind"—he was always in combat for himself and for the rest of mankind. More than any one man, it is he who has made us "our world," that is to say, "our modernity." Mr. Shaw is the intellectual cheese-mite, constantly enraptured at his own cleverness in being able to duck down through one hole in the cheese and come up through another.

But we cannot see "Ibsen." Those of us who were lucky saw Mansfield do the *Peer Gynt*. I have seen a half-private resurrection of *Hedda*. I think that those are the only two Ibsen plays that I have ever had an opportunity of seeing performed, and many others must be in like case. Professionals tell us: "Oh, they have quickened the tempo. Ibsen is too slow," and the like. So we have Shaw; that is to say, Ibsen with the sombre reality taken out, a little Nietzsche put in to enliven things, and a technique of dialogue superadded from Wilde.

I would point out that Shaw's comedy differs essentially from the French comedy of Marivaux or De Musset, for in their work you have a very considerable intensity of life and of passion veiling itself, restraining itself through a fine manner,

through a very delicate form. There is in Shaw nothing to restrain, there is a bit of intensity in a farce about Androcles, but it is followed by a fabian sermon, and his "comedy" or whatever it is, is based solely on the fact that his mind moves a little bit faster than that of the average Englishman. You cannot conceive any intelligent person going to Mr. Shaw for advice in any matter that concerned his life vitally. He is not a man at prise with reality.

It is precisely this being at grips with reality that is the core of great art. It is Galdos, or Stendhal, or Flaubert, or Turgenev or Dostoevsky, or even a romanticist like De Musset, but it is not the cheese-mite state of mind. It is not a matter of being glum; it can be carried into the most tenuous art.

The trouble with Mr. Joyce's play is precisely that he is at prise with reality. It is a "dangerous" play precisely because the author is portraying an intellectual-emotional struggle, because he is dealing with actual thought, actual questioning, not with clichés of thought and emotion.

It is untheatrical, or unstageable, precisely because the closeness and cogency of the process is, as I think, too great for an audience to be able to follow . . . under present conditions.

And that is, in turn, precisely the ground of my arraignment.

All of this comes to saying: can the drama hold its own against the novel? Can contemporary drama be permanent? It is not to be doubted that the permanent art of any period is precisely that form of art into which the best artists of the period put their best and solidest work.

That is to say, the prose of the *trecento* was not so good as Dante's poetry, and, therefore, that age remains in its verse. The prose of the Elizabethan

period was at least no better than Shakespeare's plays and we, therefore, remember that age, for the most part, by drama. The poetry of Voltaire's contemporaries was not so good as his prose and we, therefore, do not remember that period of France by its verses. For nearly a century now, when we have thought of great writers, we have been quite apt to think of the writers of novels. We perhaps think of Ibsen and Synge. We may even think of some poets. But that does not answer our problem.

The very existence of this quarterly and of the Drama League means, I take it, that an appreciable number of people believe that the drama is an important part of contemporary art . . . or that they want it to be an important or even great art of today.

It is a very complex art; therefore, let us try to think of its possibilities of greatness first hand.

ACTING.

I suppose we have all seen flawless acting. Modern acting I don't know, I should say flawless *mimetic* acting is almost as cheap and plentiful as Mr. A. Bennett's novels. There is plenty of it in the market. A lot of clever, uninteresting people doing clever, tolerable plays. They are entertaining. There is no reason to see anyone in particular rather than any other one or any six others. It is a time of commercial efficiency, of dramatic and literary fine plumbing.

But great acting? Acting itself raised to the dignity of an art?

Yes, I saw it once. I saw Bernhardt; she was so wobbly in her knees that she leaned on either her lover or her confidant during nearly all of the play, *La Sorcière*, and it was not much of a play. Her

gestures from the waist up were superb. At one point in the play, she takes off a dun-colored cloak and emerges in a close-fitting gown of cloth of gold. That is all—she takes off a cloak. That much might be stage direction. But that shaky, old woman, representing a woman in youth, took off her cloak with the power of sculpture.

That is to say, she created the image, an image, for me at least, as durable as that of any piece of sculpture that I have seen. I have forgotten most of the play; the play was of no importance.

Here was an art, an art that would have held Umewaka Minoru, great acting.

SPEECH.

But it is impractical? Perhaps only a crazy, romantic play would give a situation of abnormal tragedy sufficient to warrant such gestures? And so on.

I noticed, however, one other thing in that Bernhardt performance, namely, that the emotional effect was greater half an hour after I had left the theatre than at any time during the performance. That, of course, is a "secret of Bernhardt's success."

Maybe, but it is due to a very definite cause, which the practical manager will probably ridicule. It is possible, by the constant reiteration of sound from a very small bell, to put a very large room in a roar, whose source you cannot easily locate. It is equally possible by the reiteration of a cadence . . . say the cadence of French alexandrines, to stir up an emotion in an audience, an emotion or an emotional excitement the source of which they will be unable to determine with any ease.

That is, I think, the only "practical" argument in

favor of plays in verse. It is a very practical argument . . . but it may need the skill of Bernhardt to make it of any avail.

I might almost say that all arguments about the stage are of two sorts: the practical and the stupid. At any rate, the rare actor who aspires to art has at his disposal the two means; that is, speech and gesture. If he aspires to great art, he may try to substitute the significant for the merely mimetic.

THE CINEMA.

The "movie" is perhaps the best friend of the few people who hope for a really serious stage. I do not mean to say that it is not the medium for the expression of more utter and abject forms of human asininity than are to be found anywhere else . . . save possibly on the contemporary stage.

Take, for example, the bathos, the *bassesse*, the consummate and unfathomable imbecility of some films. I saw one a few weeks ago. It began with a printed notice pleading for the freedom of the film; then there was flashed on the screen a testimonial from a weeping Christian, a "minister of a gospel," who declared that having had his emotions, his pity, stirred by a novel of Dickens in his early youth, had done more to ennoble his life, to make him what he was than any sermons he had ever heard. Then we had some stanzas from a poem by Poe (Omission: we had had some information about Poe somewhere before this). Then we had some scenes out of a Poe story in before-the-war costume; then the characters went off to a garden party in quite modern raiment and a number of modern characters were introduced, also a Salome dance in which the lady ended by lying on her back and squirming (as is so usual at an American garden party). Then

the old before-the-war uncle reappeared. There were a few sub-plots, one taken from a magazine story that I happened to remember; later there came Moses and the burning bush, a modern detective doing the "third degree," Christ on Golgotha, some supernatural or supernormal creatures, quite non-descript, a wild chase over the hills, the tables of the law marked, "Thou shalt not kill," some more stanzas from a lyric of Poe's, and a lady fell off, no, leapt off, a cliff. There had been some really fine apparitions of the uncle's ghost somewhere before this, and finally the murderer awakened to find that he had been dreaming for the last third of the film. General reconciliation!

This film, you will note, observes the one requirement for popular stage success; there is plenty of action . . . and no one but a demi-god could possibly know what is going to come next.

Nevertheless, the "c'mat" is a friend to the lovers of good drama. I mean it is certainly inimical to the rubbishy stage. Because? Because people can get more rubbish per hour on the cinema than they can in the theatre, *and* it is cheaper. And it is on the whole a better art than the art of Frohman, Tree and Belasco. I mean to say it does leave something to the imagination.

Moreover, it is—whether the violet-tinted aesthete like it or not—it is developing an art sense. The minute the spectator begins to wonder why Charles Chaplin amuses him, the minute he comes to the conclusion that Chaplin is better than X—, Y— and Z—, because he, Chaplin, gets the maximum effect with the minimum effort, minimum expenditure, etc., etc., the said spectator is infinitely nearer a conception of art and infinitely more fit to watch creditable drama than when he, or she, is entranced

by Mrs. So-and-So's gown or by the color of Mr. So-and-So's eyes.

On the other, the sinister hand, we have the anecdote of the proud manager of "the Temple of Mammon" (as a certain London theatre is nicknamed). It was a magnificent scene, an oriental palace *de luxe*, which would have rivalled Belasco's, and the manager, taking a rather distinguished dramatist across the stage, tapped the lions supporting the throne with his gold-headed cane and proudly said, "Solid brass!"

Is it any wonder that the simple Teuton should have supposed this country ripe for invasion?

Well, benevolent reader, there you have it. The drama, the art of Aeschylus and of Shakespeare, the art that was to cast great passions and great images upon the mind of the auditor! There is the "drama" staged for the most part by men who should be "interior decorators" furnishing the boudoirs and reception rooms of upper-class prostitutes, there is the faint cry for art-scenery with as little drama as possible, and there is the trivialized Ibsen, for Shaw is the best we get, and all Shaw's satire on England was really done long since in a sentence quoted by Sterne:

"Gravity: A mysterious carriage of the body to cover the defects of the mind."

Even so, Shaw is only a stage in the decadence, for if we must call Shaw trivialized Ibsen, what shall we say of the next step lower, to-wit: prettified Shaw?

What welcome is this stage to give the real agonist if he tries to write "drama"? These problems are your problems, gracious reader, for you belong to that large group whose hope is better drama.

Also, in your problem plays you must remember

that all the real problems of life are insoluble and that the real dramatist will be the man with a mind in search; he will grope for his answer and he will differ from the sincere auditor in that his groping will be the keener, the more far-reaching, the more conscious, or at least the more articulate; whereas, the man who tries to preach at you, the man who stops his play to deliver a sermon, will only be playing about the surface of things or trying to foist off some theory.

So Mr. Joyce's play is dangerous and unstageable because he is not *playing* with the subject of adultery, but because he is actually driving in the mind upon the age-long problem of the rights of personality and of the responsibility of the intelligent individual for the conduct of those about him, upon the age-long question of the relative rights of intellect, and emotion, and sensation, and sentiment.

And the question which I am trying to put and which I reform and reiterate is just this: Must our most intelligent writers do this sort of work in the novel, *solely in the novel*, or is it going to be, in our time, possible for them to do it in drama?

On your answer to that question the claims of modern drama must rest.

EZRA POUND.

DRAMATISTS CRITICALLY STUDIED.

Bernard Shaw, A Critical Study, by P. P. Howe;
Maurice Maeterlinck, A Critical Study, by Una Taylor.
Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1915.



MARTIN SECKER'S *Series of Critical Studies*, two of which are considered here in the American edition, contain volumes on Robert Bridges, Samuel Butler, George Gissing, Thomas Hardy, Henrik Ibsen, Henry James, Maurice Maeterlinck, George Meredith, William Morris, Walter Pater, D. G. Rossetti, Bernard Shaw, R. L. Stevenson, A. C. Swinburne, J. M. Synge, Leo Tolstoi, Walt Whitman, and W. B. Yeats.

The dramatists under discussion in the present review are among the half-dozen leading living dramatists of the world. The series, one may surmise, can be very well estimated and appraised on the basis of the studies of Mr. Howe and Miss Taylor. Certainly it must be recognized at the outset that these volumes are immune from very destructive criticism as definitive estimates of the figures considered, by reason of the fact that they are admittedly only "studies," though self-respectingly purporting to be "critical" in tone.

If we expect to find anything novel, brilliant, or definitive about the "critical study" of Shaw, we are doomed to the most gloomy and dull disappointment. To me the disappointment is particularly great in view of the expectations raised; for one of the most acute and brilliant series of essays on a

group of contemporary dramatists is *Dramatic Portraits**, by this self-same Mr. Howe. Those essays were delightfully one-sided and satirically unfair; but they were keen and subtle *exposés* of the weakest points of the luckless dramatists under discussion. In the present volume, Mr. Howe has let himself go, with little thought for his subject, but with every intention of saying whatever seemed to pop into his head. It is feebly argumentative, uninterestingly discursive, and imperfectly critical. I cannot imagine anyone who has never read a line of Shaw (Does such a creature exist?) picking up Mr. Howe's book and getting any sort of credible picture or rational representation of G. B. S. May I say that Chapter I is futile and superfluous? I can conceive no possible excuse for it. The book has no beginning until Chapter II—"Economics." Mr. Howe accepts as valid Mr. Shaw's rather noteworthy observation in a letter to me: "In all my plays my economic studies have played as important a part as a knowledge of anatomy does in the works of Michael Angelo."

After the seriousness, solemn and deadly, with which Mr. Shaw and the Fabian Society have been treated by many round-eyed, fat-headed young "uplifters" in both England and the United States, there is a sense of amused relaxation in reading Mr. Howe's definition of the Fabian Society as "a body of persons of both sexes who have met together once a fortnight for a quarter of a century to listen to Mr. Shaw, and have left before his speech was over if the duration of its interest conflicted with the departure of their train for the suburbs." And we find it easy to forgive Mr. Howe for refusing to take Shaw seriously as an economist, on the ground

* Mitchell Kennerley, New York, 1913.

that Shaw cared nothing for economics in itself, but used it merely as a means of getting a hearing for his views on things in general. "He cleared the economists out of their corner just as, later, he chased the dramatists out of the theatre, and for the same reason—to make room for some goods of his own which he had all ready for delivery." The only serious discussion of Shaw as an economist Mr. Howe characteristically inserts in a foot-note: the text is rigorously frivolous. He charges Shaw with echoing, parrot-like, the views of John Stuart Mill (plus the inevitable bias); denies that the study is an economic one; and takes a sly dig at the luckless Shaw in the interjected comment that Shaw gets his real pleasure out of the "divine science" by "making any kind of a point, whether it is his own or another's; for that, in its essence, is the debater's pleasure." Mr. Howe, rather absurdly, I think, asserts that Shaw "has done nothing as a constructive economist to be compared with Mr. J. A. Hobson's analysis of the industrial system." Such a remark in a "critical study"—as if Shaw had ever tried. No one but Mr. Howe has ever pretended that Shaw desired, or ever attempted, or ever had time to attempt, to rival the professional economist. Mr. Howe analyzes Shaw as a man who has no respect for the doctrine of "art for art's sake"—as if Shaw had not trumpeted this forth again and again! He sums up Shaw, appropriately enough, in Shaw's own words: "I want to change the ideas of the people of this country." People like Mr. Howe are occasionally startled when they discover that Shaw knows what he is talking about and talks about what he knows—even if that occasionally happens to be himself.

One original observation, introducing a novel idea, is the suggestion of a relationship between the ideas

of William Godwin and Bernard Shaw. As long as he is about it, I don't see why Mr. Howe doesn't make the most of a comparison between Shaw and Dickens—a subject sadly neglected by authors of “critical studies,” “appreciations,” and the like. Godwin's “Beware of Women” suggests Shaw, we are told; though it should be remarked that Mr. Shaw has exhibited profound reverence for the objects which he rightly regards as worthy of reverence. “Marriage is now understood as a monopoly and the worst of monopolies” (Godwin) is mildly, but not acutely, Shavian. His “Morality itself is nothing but a calculation of consequences” is certainly a close parallel to Shaw's “Morals being mostly only social habits and circumstantial necessities”; but such is a mere scintillation from the Nietzschean and Neo-European holocaust of scrapped moralities. I think that, after these trivial false starts, Mr. Howe does finally make his point that Godwin and Shaw were fundamentally alike in their attitude towards society and in the expression of their programs. Certainly Shaw might have written as one of his own fundamental maxims the following statement by Godwin: “What I should desire is, not by violence to change its (the world's) institutions, but by discussion to change its ideas.” But after all, if Mr. Howe had known about the Fabian Society and what it means, he would have realized that Godwin's saying is nothing but another way of putting the fundamental tenet, not merely of Shavianism, but of Fabianism. William Godwin was the first Fabian—without knowing it.

Mr. Howe understands Shaw thoroughly, as a dramatist; and he has said elsewhere some of the cruelest and most damaging things ever said about him. In the chapter, “Dramatics,” in the present

volume, he reiterates the familiar charge that with Shaw the play is *not* the thing; that "it is in the message, and not in the play, that the social conscience is to be caught." Much of truth does rest in this statement; but it is lacking in the generosity to acknowledge that Shaw has invented a new type of play in which the play is synonymous with—that is, identical with—the pastime of catching the social conscience. Shaw has made the crass British public, in particular, realize that "catching the social conscience" may be made an essentially dramatic affair. That, to be sure, is a conspicuous achievement—which Mr. Howe is neither able to see nor willing to consider.

In conclusion, Mr. Howe makes two statements which are both interesting and true. One is that Shaw, who has narrowly set up effectiveness in assertion as the touchstone of style, has nevertheless actually succeeded in wielding "the best everyday style of his generation." And furthermore, he points out that, though starting out on a crusading expedition against romance, he has succeeded in making that crusade one of the events in modern literature. It is unfortunate for Mr. Howe that these things have already been said—long ago.

The study, by Una Taylor, of the Belgian mystic is an earnest, quite serious, and sufficiently painstaking critical interpretation. The analysis of the plays is unusually detailed and uniformly sympathetic. An agreeable feature is the employment of Maeterlinck's own impeccable French in all the quotations. The study of Maeterlinck as a dramatist follows the beaten track, with nothing conspicuous by way of hazard or blunder, conjecture or surmise, to fix it upon the attention. Maeterlinck will be best remembered, beyond doubt, for his wise-hearted, soulful

essays. We are categorically assured: "And whether or not such an investigation incline the student to decry in Maeterlinck the apostle of a future creed of emotional morality, it will be readily conceded that as an apostle of a new, or a revivalist of an old, gospel of philosophic mysticism he is, among contemporary writers, its foremost literary exponent." Surely, a harmless assertion—in regard to an eminence wholly unquestioned!

ARCHIBALD HENDERSON.

NEW YORK'S CHRISTMAS FANTASY

A municipal celebration of Christmas, with a community tree and carol singing, New York has had for a sufficient number of years to warrant its being named traditional. This idea has been borrowed widely in smaller cities and towns and in villages, till it has become a typical American custom.

The anonymous committee for the 1915 community tree in New York City determined to have something different, and decided to present a play in connection with the tree. It must be, said the committee, an out-doors play, to provide room for all who would come. It must be short to allow for an intensely cold day and an audience standing. It must interest people of all ages, and of all races and creeds. It must be filled with the Christmas spirit, but without Santa Claus, fairies and brownies, without the wise men and the Virgin and the manger, without any of the traditional Christmas play impedimenta.

With these conditions and wishes, after Thanksgiving the committee consulted with Mr. Stuart Walker of the Portmanteau Theatre, with the result that on Christmas night his traveling playhouse was set up in Madison Square, and a community fantasy, *The Seven Gifts*, was presented.

The audience gathered early, and was indeed the community—foreign women without hats, artists, newspaper and theatrical men, rubbing shoulders with American workmen. Quietly the crowd waited, and very quietly they watched the performance: “the most orderly audience we’ve ever had in the

square," said the police on duty; "we've had nothing to do."

The band played an overture, the trumpeters signaled for silence, the chimes sounded, and the waiting crowd edged forward to see their Christmas play; for well had the secret of the committee been kept. That there was to be a play was known, and that it was a Portmanteau Theatre creation, but the story nobody had told—for a part of a Christmas gift is the surprise of the recipient.

The lights came on, disclosing the blue velvet hangings, and the three levels of the Portmanteau stage. From one side appeared the Wanderer, an old man with a pack on his back; he saw the great audience waiting, turned and saw the closely drawn curtains, and asked what it was all for. He started to pull aside the hangings to investigate, when out stepped the Prologue, who explained that the theatre was for the Wanderer, and for all the audience, for every one who would share in the story telling.

The Prologue clapped his hands, and the curtains opened, showing a tableau of a pine tree; then a moment's wait, and again they opened, disclosing the palace of the Emerald Queen. This was announced by placards shown at each side of the stage by the Wanderer and the Prologue; and from time to time a new one told who was coming next, and just what was taking place in the court. For at a community play there must be no risk that any guest misunderstand. This device was, of course, a borrowing from the "movies"—but what an idea to accomplish this purpose with no interruption of the action!

An out-of-door play has always the difficulty of not being heard, and failing to reach its audience because its whole trust is in the spoken word. And in Madison Square there was the roar of city traffic

to be taken into consideration. This Mr. Walker met by writing his play as a pantomime. The audience did nothing but look and look; and that the author-producer succeeded in a rare combination of a story lending itself to gestures only, and actors who could tell it, was proved by the fact that the spectators watched its progress in almost absolute silence, and at its close waited a long five minutes or more before leaving the square.

And what was the story of *The Seven Gifts*?

Enter the Queen, with her retinue. She bows to the audience, her guests for the time being; and like a royal hostess, she would share with them the pleasures of her gifts. It is Christmas in the court, and the bearers bring in two great wreaths with gay colored streamers.

While she is waiting for the guests, comes an intermezzo; a big black box is carried in, and out jumps Jack-in-the-box to dance for the Queen. Then come the seven gift-bringers. First arrive the Lowly Man and his Son, almost blinded by the lights of the court. Awkwardly, they present their gift—a poor, scraggly, little Christmas tree, which causes laughter among the courtiers. The Lowly Man is deeply hurt, and when the Son points out the red ribbons on the court wreaths, he quickly accepts this suggestion and takes the warm scarf from his neck, tears it into shreds, and decorates the poor little tree.

Then comes the Richest Man in the World, whose retainers bring in chests of gifts—an enormous cake, jewels, rich fabrics. Not content with thus presenting them, the Richest Man shows the Queen each one; but while he is holding up the fabrics, a bubble blows by and attracts her interest. He tries to get it for her, commands it to come to him, offers it money and jewels, then sends a servant to catch it. But the

slave's pursuit is unsuccessful, and the proud master has drawn his sword to kill, when the Queen interposes, "Would you take a man's life for a mere bubble?" It floats near them again, and the Richest Man eagerly reaches for it. But it breaks and is gone!

Enter then the Haughty Lady with her servants, bearing three irises as her gift. With a proud bow she acknowledges the presence of the Queen, scornfully disdains a seat next the Lowly Man, and goes to another. The stares of the court remind her of her gift, and she lays one flower on a pillow, and sends her servant to present it.

Then comes the Humble Woman, her gift a cardinal bird which sings for the Queen. A bearer offers a cage, but the Humble Woman refuses indignantly and lets the bird fly away. Then, realizing what a terrible thing she has done, she falls on her knees before the throne. But the Queen, understanding, kisses her on both cheeks, saying, "You gave the bird its freedom; it gave its song to me." The Haughty Lady's spirit is chastened, and she begs the Queen's permission to give her two flowers to the Lowly Man and his Son, and goes to sit between them. "It was the Humble Woman made her do that!" commented a child in the audience, who caught the lesson as quickly as did the street boy who called out, at the Haughty Lady's appearance, "Gee! Ain't she the proud, stuck-up thing!"

A fanfare of trumpets announces the Bravest Man, whose gift is a tiger skin; he must needs show the Queen how it was obtained in the jungle. Jack-in-the-box dresses up in the skin, and their combat, telling of boasting and pretence and bloodless victory through the salt on the tiger's tail, provides a delightful comedy touch.

The next was the Strolling Player, whose gift was a play called *The Moon Lady*. A true pantomime this, a bit of beauty and imagination, the setting a woodland glade, the actors Pierrot and the Moon Lady, who is condemned to go as an ugly old hag till she is kissed by one who has never kissed before. The transformation, the dance, and the love making are cut short by the dawn, and at the crowing of the cock the fair lady takes down the silver moon and hangs up the sun, then steals away to her own land.

Last of all comes the Dear Child, her gift a somewhat battered doll, which she lovingly kisses before she gives it to the Queen. It is the only gift which is an integral part of the giver, the only one that comes from the heart; and accepting it, the Queen tells the Dear Child to take her choice of all the gifts. The Child examines them, and refuses all till she sees the star in the square and asks for that. At this climax of the fantasy, the Christmas tree lights flashed on, thus making the tree a vital part of the play.

The Queen dismisses the court, and slowly leaves; the Dear Child with her doll sits on the throne, while the lights on the stage grow dimmer, and on the community tree burn more and more brightly.

A typical Portmanteau performance in its suggestive setting, its beautiful pictures and color combinations, and its marvelous lighting, the significance of *The Seven Gifts* is not in the Portmanteau's success, nor in the success of the plans of the committee, but in the fact that this fantasy, given in a portable playhouse, out of doors in the people's park, is a step toward the civic theatre. It suggests wonderful possibilities as to what can be done, during spring and summer and autumn, in giving artistic plays free to all the people.

GRACE HUMPHREY.

THE NEW BOOKS

Contemporary French Dramatists, by Barrett Clark.
Stewart and Kidd Company. Cincinnati, 1915.

Here is a book which opens as a public highway a road long reserved for travel by those who read French. One feels indebted to the author, for the orchards on either hand are rich with fruitage. Some to be sure we have already found access to: Rostand in especial has been frequently translated and largely discussed. For the most part, however, the material is for the first time available in English. The subjects treated contain the following: The Théâtre Libre, François de Curel, Eugene Brieux, Georges de Porto-Riche, Paul Hervieu, Henri Lavedan, Maurice Donnay, Jules Lemaitre, Alfred Capus, Henri Bataille, Henri Bernstein, Robert de Flers, and M. de Caillavet. Attractive features of the book are the appended bibliographies relating to each essay topic and the lists of plays of each dramatist, giving the year of production.

The author's style, which in earlier work has been inclined toward awkwardness, has become smooth and natural to a degree which in itself lends the volume charm. His personal acquaintance with the men whose plays he treats, his easy familiarity with his subject, and his informal, flowing style give the publication a reading value which works of this sort seldom can claim. The essays are, to be sure, rather sketchy, but this is a fault due largely to the attempt to cover so many subjects in a popular way. Mr. Clark gives his aim as rather "to afford the reader some insight into the works of a number of the more

important representative French dramatists of the past twenty-five years, and trace in an informal manner some of the chief characteristics of these writers, than to compile a historical study of the contemporary Parisian style." This object is successfully accomplished.

T. B. H.

Othello: An Historical and Comparative Study, by Elmer Edgar Stoll, Ph. D., University of Minnesota. University of Minnesota Studies in Language and Literature, No. 2, 1915.

Dr. Stoll's criticism is here, as in former articles on Hamlet and on Falstaff, destructive rather than constructive. He advocates the view—view rather than theory—that in representing the high-souled Othello as falling swiftly and blindly a prey to Iago's subtleties Shakespeare was not "working out" a character of Othello as we moderns would work it out, but was following a stage convention of his time. "The plot which develops austere out of the characters, without conspiracy or deliberate contriving" would have seemed to the Elizabethans, Stoll opines, a tame affair. Such "wrongful assumption of guilt" as the newly-wed Othello lays upon his bride at Iago's instigation may today be condemned as a technical sin in stagecraft, along with "the aside, the soliloquy, impersonation, eavesdropping, confidences," etc., but in Shakespeare's time it was a recognized and popular motive; and the poet unhesitatingly used it in *Othello*, in the *Winter's Tale*, and in many lesser situations. As such a technical device, however, this succumbing of Othello is to be regarded, and not as a trait of character to be elucidated by careful psychological analysis. The storyteller's convention, that a man must believe what he is told, has to be conceded to the Elizabethan poet,

and our attempts to "explain" Othello's conduct without such concession are useless. The modern craving for character-unity was not felt by the Elizabethans; they were not psychologists, but storytellers, and if the story willed it, Gloster believed Edmund, and Oliver embraced Orlando, and Claudio repudiated Hero. No historical or psychological lore is needed to justify a method that the literary historian recognizes as customary in Renaissance art, though intolerable to modern.

Dr. Stoll sets forth his argument with much plausibility, marred by lack of constructive literary power. The constructive is also wanting in his conclusion, where he has only general remarks to offer in answer to the pertinent question—What then is Shakespeare's dramatic work, if it be not psychological? In the absence of reasoned reply to that query, his paper remains a suggestion rather than a contribution.

ELEANOR PRESCOTT HAMMOND.

The Art of Ballet, by Mark Perugini. Published by J. B. Lippincott Company. Philadelphia, 1915.

A new volume on the vital subject of the dance is *The Art of Ballet* by Mark E. Perugini. Its scope differs from that of the many books on this subject that have gone before, in that the author limits it to the ballet, and to that phase of the art as it has appeared in France and in England, particularly in the latter country.

Ballet itself is given rather careful definition, summed up in: "a ballet is a series of solo and concerted dances, with mimetic actions, accompanied by music and scenic accessories, telling a story." Its chief elements are dancing, miming, music, and scenic effect, and it is in the proper harmonizing of these elements that the art of ballet-composition lies.

While the various elements of the ballet appeared in very early times in the dancing of the Egyptians, the plays of the Greeks, and the pantomimes of the Romans, it was not until along toward the close of the fifteenth century, in the opulent Renaissance, that great spectacles of true modern ballet nature were given.

In England these took the form of masques, while in France and Italy, ballet was the name given to similar performances. In them dancing was not the most important element, for dance-technique had not yet been evolved. It was not until the reign of Louis XIV that dancing came into its own, with the founding of the Royal Academy of Dancing.

From this point the book is a record of the great artists and masters of ballet. It is interesting to note that while England warmly welcomed and admired these people, none of them was a native of that country. France and Italy produced the long line that started with Sallé, Carmargo, and the Vestris, Guimard, and Despréaux.

Jean Georges Noverre of the eighteenth century was one of the greatest of ballet masters, and stands forth as a writer on this subject. His *Lettres sur la Danse et sur les Ballets* show great enthusiasm for the art, and great faith in its future as a companion art of music, poetry, and sculpture.

The early nineteenth century is full of great names—the Elssler, Taglioni, Grisi, and Cerito among the women, and Carlo Blasis among the men. To be a successful producer of ballets requires a great variety of talents; and Blasis was a Leonardo of the art. In creating a ballet, he was able to evolve the plot, to teach the dances and expression, as well as to design the scenery and costumes. That he chose to be a ballet master rather than a musician or artist

shows the high position of ballet in his time. It was under him that the Italian ballet rose to its highest point, for his efforts were largely put forth in Milan.

After a period of comparative quiet, ballet in England reappeared at the Alhambra and Empire music-halls. The author devotes considerable space to an account of the many ballets produced in these two theatres. None of these ballets came to America, and Adeline Genée was the first of the Empire stars to tour this country.

The volume closes with brief mention of the Russians, Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, and other modern dancers as they have appeared in London.

The author sticks so closely to his plan as stated at the beginning of his work that one wishes he might have ventured farther afield. England as an art-producing nation, particularly along the line of ballet, is not an inspiring subject, and the part of the volume devoted to the music-halls is a bit too much in the order of a catalogue. Indeed this fault appears throughout the volume. The work appeals much more to English people than to Americans. The author has apparently perused a vast number of programs to bring together the information he presents, and he does his work in a most painstaking manner. Although *The Art of Ballet* seems a bit lacking in inspiration, for those interested in the phase of dancing it represents, it gives an apparently complete record of its subject.

THE HINMAN STUDIO—F. G.

THE PRINTED PLAY.

Master Will of Stratford, by Louise Ayers Garnett. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Altogether inadequate must be this brief notice of the delightful Shakesperean fantasy which Mrs. Garnett has recently penned. If the Shakespere Tercentenary Celebration produces no more than the excellent bibliographies of usable Elizabethan material in folk dance, song, and minor drama, and such charming plays as *The Lover's Garden Masque*, in the November *Drama*, and *Master Will of Stratford*, the celebration may be counted an unqualified success.

Master Will is an attempt to recreate the boyhood of The Bard and to recreate it so that the material of many of the later plays is seen in embryo. The atmosphere of old England is vividly presented as a background for the very human and convincingly boyish Will. The chief delight of the drama, however, is its delicate fancy, a certain misty dream quality which can only be the work of a person of fine imagination.

The play gives a remarkable opportunity for amateurs who do not feel equal to a Shakespere play and yet desire to gain the spirit and charm of the poet.

Plays for Small Stages, by Mary Aldis. New York: Duffield and Company. 1915.

While the "little theatre" movement may not have accomplished as much as was hoped from it in the way of municipal subvention for drama per-

formances and the rapid development of an intelligent audience for "new drama," it has achieved worthy results in its stimulation of the amateur playwright. An art is potent in any period in proportion to the number of people attempting to take part in it creatively. Within the past ten years the number interesting themselves in stage production, in costumes, lights, scenery, and the like—and in the writing of drama—has grown five to tenfold. The effect of the constant experimentation is seen increasingly in the commercial productions which nowadays—as never before in this country—have an eye out for achievements outside the commercial world. It is a usual production now that has a feeling for design and for color and simplicity of settings. Among the publishers the effect is seen especially in the great number of one-act plays which are seeking print. Where so many are working in a medium, success must come to a few.

A private little theatre that has stood for worthy plays in worthy production is that of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Aldis in Lake Forest, Illinois. In the preface to the recent volume of plays by Mrs. Aldis, she writes of the venture in this wise: "In the Spring of 1911 I cast an affectionate and calculating eye upon a small frame house next door. It was shortly acquired; partitions and ceiling were pulled out, the lean-to kitchen became the stage; dressing-rooms were added and a miniature theatre which we called the Playhouse was ready. In the five Summers since, a group of amateur players have presented some fifty one-act plays to the great pleasure and interest of themselves and the alternate, sometimes mingled, amusement, surprise, disapproval and horror of their neighbors." It is from coteries such as these that art gets its greatest

stimulus. The country at large offers small sympathy to the creative artist before he has made his name. Groups of workers drawn together by genuine love for the art and a community enthusiasm for its craftsmanship must be a stimulus to a more voluminous and valuable product. Such a group is that of the Lake Forest Players.

That the five years of working together have been of value is seen not only in the finished productions of the Players but in the many plays which are written for performance by them. Of these the first group to be published have been written by one of the founders. The five plays in the present volume since they have been written for a small stage in the hands of skilled amateurs are especially fitted for little theatre performances. Already they have been given many presentations.

Plays for Small Stages are in number five: *Mrs. Pat and the Law*, a tenement comedy; *The Drama Class of Tankaha, Nevada*, a satire on women's "culture-clubs"; *Extreme Unction*, about a dying Magdalene; *The Letter*, a dialogue in the writing-room of a club, and *Temperament*, termed a "musical tragedy," a delightful treatment of domestic incompatibility.

T. B. H.

We quote from the last paragraph of Dr. Brander Matthews' critical essay on the drama from 1800 to the present, prefacing Doubleday, Page's new two-volume collection of plays, as explaining the novel method in which the dramas are presented:

"It is one of the objects of this series of volumes to aid in the acquisition of the art of reading a play. Half a hundred of the most important and interesting pieces of the last half century have been chosen; and the story of each has been retold in the form of a succinct narrative which from time to time

gives place to the actual dialogue of the play itself."

The plays included are mostly the recognized standard examples of stage-writing since the rejuvenation of the theatre about 1860. A mention of a few of the plays not usually published in other anthologies might be of interest to some: Tennyson's *Becket*, Chambers' *The Tyranny of Tears*, Esmond's *When We Were Twenty-One*, Howard's *Shenandoah*, Belasco's *The Return of Peter Grimm*, Mirabeau's *Business Is Business*, Pailleron's *The Cult of Freedom*, and Sudermann's *John the Baptist*.

Cheaper and cheaper becomes the printed play. For twenty-five or fifty cents can be purchased any of the forty-four plays thus far published by Samuel French in The World's Best Plays Series. Barrett Clark is the editor of this new series, which comprises modern and ancient drama (to the present, largely comedy and farce) of France, Italy, Spain, Russia, Greece and Rome. Prefaced to each volume is a short historical note, with a few suggestions for staging, by Mr. Clark. The value of such a series to amateurs can hardly be overestimated. Drama in English has contained little that is light, clean, and artistically stimulating. The low price is a boon, too, as it permits the purchase of a variety of plays before a selection is made, and the possession of a copy of the play by each member of the company intending to perform it. The plays are exceedingly well chosen and they are convenient and attractive in format.

The titles of a few of the plays already published will help the reader to form an idea of the variety and standard of the series: *The Boor* and *The Marriage Proposal*, by Tchekhoff; *Modesty*, by Hervieu;

The Phormio, by Terence; *The Twins*, by Plautus; *The House of Fourchambault*, by Augier; *Brignol and His Daughter*, by Capus; *The Beneficent Bear*, by Goldoni; *Crainquebille*, by Anatole France; and that remarkable old comedy, *Master Patelin*.

The increasing interest in Russian writings has prompted The Macmillan Company to bring out an edition of Andreyev's *The Life of Man*; thus two publishing houses are publishing the same play. Meaning what? Meaning, among other things, that Mr. Alfred Knopf prophesied rightly when he concluded that Russian literature in English is going to be a profitable field. The new edition is translated by C. J. Hogarth and the price is \$1.25.

The New Citizenship, by Percy MacKaye. The Macmillan Company. New York, 1915.

The sub-title of this little book is *A Civic Ritual Devised for Places of Public Meeting in America*. In other words, it is a masque-like ceremony for the purpose of impressing upon the newly naturalized the seriousness of their duties and privileges as members of the American commonwealth. The ritual is given with detailed and precise directions for adaptations to large and small presentations. There are some six or seven speaking characters who declaim appropriate excerpts from our best patriotic addresses; these with tableaux, songs, and dances by groups comprise an inspiring program of American ideals. It was originally written for and used last May on Citizenship Day in the stadium of the College of the City of New York.

Mr. MacKaye has long been known as the most nationally conscientious of our playwrights, perhaps even of all our writers. That being the case, such an

effort as a civic ritual to instill in the hearts of the foreign-born a sense of the fact that there is something more in the meaning of the label American than just higher wages must be revered. Regarding the ritual as such, the material of it is impressive enough if the presentation is adequate. Not so many participants are needed as excellent choral work, stentorian voices, and richness of costume.

A question is suggested by this matter of initiating foreigners: Why not institute the ritualistic custom of revealing American ideals to Americans on their coming to a voting age?

The Treasure, by David Pinski. B. W. Huebsch. New York, 1915.

Now that the plays of the foreign theatres are being translated in almost wholesale quantities, it is not surprising to receive a drama of the modern Jewish stage. This, the first of its nationality to be brought to English readers, is not entirely unknown to other than the Semitic race: Max Reinhardt chose to produce it in Berlin in 1910, when it gained the further recommendation of a favorable comment from the critic Paul Schlenther.

Despite the fact that the Jews in an early chapter of their history were forbidden private property, causing the rise of the oft-satirized tradition of money-love, and despite the circumstances that all of the persons in *The Treasure* are Jews and the theme is greed, the reader cannot but feel that the play transcends its ethnological bounds. This apparently is due to the penetrating method of treating the simple story, which is merely the discovery of a few shekels in a cemetery by the half-wit son of a grave-digger. The fact that the numskull has forgotten for the moment where he found the money

generates the belief in the family of the grave-digger that there must be more where that came from. The daughter goes out and spends the money and unknowingly spreads the rumor of the newly-acquired riches of her family; this naturally brings down upon her humble and poverty-stricken home the great army of charity duns who, when they learn that the bulk of the treasure is still to be found, call out the people of the village to spade up the graveyard till the coveted coin is discovered. The sudden remembrance by the half-wit of the precise location and the investigation of that place disclosing no further treasure, the money-grabbers are left with nothing but their desire.

The deft touches of Mr. Pinski's work are in the depiction of the various motives for wealth. In Tille, the daughter of the grave-digger, is symbolized the earth-wide delusion that money brings to the poverty-stricken emancipation, romance, and the amenities of sweetness and light. Clashed with this motive are plain, onerous greed for no purpose but to hoard; desire under the guise of public service, care of the sick, and the like; desire for power; the collective desire of the community; and the solicitations of the church. A rare quality of the dramatist's writing is in the character-drawing which is made in broad strokes and with a verisimilitude which presents a world-old motive with admirable freshness.

The Faithful, by John Masefield. The Macmillan Company. New York, 1915.

G. B. S.'s contention that the will to live is all powerful, otherwise we should arbitrarily end our existence (as we rationally should, since the pains of life outnumber the pleasures), would seem to be contradicted by *The Faithful*, which agrees with Steven-

son, in *Aes Triplex*, and the thousands who are offering their lives this day in embattled Europe. Mr. Masfield's drama of the fifteenth century is on the theme of death from the point of view of the Japanese. In that feudal age, to be sure, death was more relentlessly self-imposed than now, notwithstanding the hari-kari of General Nogi and his wife a short while ago. The basis of the drama is an old legend which serves competently to evince the many motives for self-killing.

The workmanship of the play is sufficiently skillful to show the whole-hearted conviction of the Nipponese in their belief and their dreadful conscientiousness in carrying it out in deed. To praise the piece more would perhaps be walking on the proverbial thin ice. The plot is simple to tenuity; the characterization does not grip us (perhaps because we are occidental); and the dialogue and verse are no more than good. The pervading influence of Japan in the realms of art is evidenced here in the suggested simplicity of the two scenes and their combination: the one is the plain three walls of a palace set up-stage; the other is merely a landscape drop let down in front of it.

The Porcupine, by Edwin Arlington Robinson. The Macmillan Company. New York, 1915.

Mr. Robinson's tragi-comedy is a notable piece of work. It is indicative of the fine imagination of a poet and of the rigid exclusiveness of the artist.

The situation presented is that of a group of New England people, some deviously related and some merely friends, some who have married and who never should have married. They are men and women, as Larry puts it, who have about as much business getting married as alligators have getting

vaccinated. Into this circle suddenly comes a Don Juan-like figure, Larry Scammon, half-brother to Rollo Brewster, the schoolmaster, in whose house the action takes place. Scammon brings his qualities of swaggering good-nature and incorrigible hopefulness and applies them to the discontented married and the discontented unmarried. His simile of tying the silver cord of cheer around the cracked golden bowl, lest it fall apart, is an effective one except in one instance: by Rachel (the porcupine), the wife of Brewster, Scammon is the father of a son, an indiscretion of which his half-brother is unaware. Given the character of Rachel, a sentimental, morose and nervous being, this proves to be a tangle not to be simplified except as the porcupine cuts it by swallowing aconite.

Two aspects of the play deserve especial mention: the dialogue, aside from being extremely crisp and rich, is expert in the niceties of its characterization; second, there is a strict economy, a prime canon of art. Everything has been thrown out except that which contributes vitally to the definition of character or the progress of the action; in this has been gained that fourth of the unities, one of the most valid of the newer tendencies of dramatic art, the clean-cut unity of impression.

Criminals, by George Middleton. B. W. Huebsch. New York, 1915. Price, 50c.

The main point raised by the subject matter of *Criminals* is the query: Does lack of sex education breed entire ignorance? Janet is the daughter of a well-to-do, self-satisfied family of the respectability of the nineteenth century type, supposed in that more or less deprecable era to be the backbone of nations (a backbone of which, according to the newer

generation, the vertebrae were hollow). She is brought up in the conventional way; she lives by the established rule of the great middle class, sheltered and thus oblivious to the frightful acts committed under cover of respectability, and most of all, completely blind to what Mr. Middleton calls the fact of marriage. Not only is she not taught to see in the sex relation the culmination of all that is good and beautiful in a marital companionship, she is left to face her marriage wholly unprepared except for a faint idea that sex is universally cannibalistic and brutal, and only indulged in by unspeakable people. Her wedding night arrives and she, horror-stricken at her discovery, leaves her husband of a few hours to come home and shut herself up in the bedroom of her maidenhood, torn with disillusionment and agony—all this to the stupefaction of her father and mother and to the natural bewilderment of the bridegroom.

To put the question again, can such a tragedy be wholly due to ignorance? Since this is the very basis of the play, the author makes certain in the preface to establish the validity of his case by citing the testimony of psychologists, neurologists, and his own information. We admit with him that the general point of the play may apply with "varying degrees of intensity"; but it twists logic to concede the premise of the drama, which is that there is such a thing as complete ignorance. Believing that there is such a thing, one is not taking cognizance of two facts: the self-assertion of the sex instinct in every normal person, regardless of environment and education, and the consciousness of its predominance in young love. However, if one can accept the premises he will find the play, Brioux-like as it sometimes is, one of the strongest works of Mr. Middleton. The deft han-

dling of usually undiscussed material, the clear cut action, the peculiarly human, connotative speech, and the evident sincerity of the writer make the play eminently worth reading.

Circe: A Dramatic Fantasy, by Isaac Flagg. Printed and bound by The Roycrofters, East Aurora. New York, 1915.

And now comes Greek mythology dramatized! Masefield's moulding of a Japanese legend into a contemporary play in *The Faithful* and *Circe* might stimulate the conjecture that some of the more poetic playwrights are seeing the drama of the future in the fables of the past. Even if this casual deduction prove to have some truth and *Circe* be a part of a movement to revive theatric interest in myths, we doubt if Isaac Flagg's fantasy will ever be reckoned as an influential factor. Why? Because its attractions are secondary in importance and only three in number. They are the very human humor of some of the minor characters, the extraordinary interest of the author in settings and costumes, and the printing and binding of the book.

The Immigrants, by Percy MacKaye. B. W. Huebsch. New York, 1915.

What has been seldom attempted, has been tried by Mr. MacKaye with the undaunted spirit with which he goes into everything. The opera with a purpose is this time his end. The occasion offered itself a few years ago to write a libretto to be set to music by the American composer, Mr. Frederick Converse, and to be produced by the Boston Opera Company. War conditions prevented the production; hence the publishing in book form of Mr. MacKaye's share.

His theme is a pertinent one: the disillusionment of immigrants on coming to this country, where they have been led by a charlatan agent in Europe and where they expect to find that equality of opportunity which is the theoretical basis of our republic. Though the author does not say so, it is logical to conclude that he expects to have his moral brought home to the audience, and this by the aid of music. Just there is the unsurmountable difficulty; tradition tells us that, in every successful opera, in the process of fusing the libretto and the music, one has been lost sight of, and that one the libretto. Wagner, the only musician who was a poet, philosopher and politician in one, has been the one conscious striver after the union of music, poetry and action in order to produce a definite impression on his hearers, and he has failed signally; we listen to *The Ring* almost wholly for the musical beauties. All of this naturally means that music can, with the exception of nature descriptions, express few concrete concepts. Thus must *The Immigrants* as a pamphleteering libretto yield to music or fail as an opera.

The drama reads badly. The reasons for this are obvious: for purposes of production as an opera, dramatic qualities had to be sacrificed; choruses and duets occur often; the diction written to be sung is necessarily plain; and the plot is luridly melodramatic, with a cursing villain, and a hero and a heroine who are paragons of virtue. A. K. E.

RECENT MAGAZINE ARTICLES ON THE DRAMA

PUBLISHED PLAYS AND SPECIAL ARTICLES

- Jan Vygrava*, play in five acts by František Adolf Subert;
Poet Lore, Summer Number.
- Hilarion*, play in one act by Josephine Howell-Carter;
ditto.
- The Return of the Closet Drama; ditto.
- Boston Opera and Pavlova Ballet, by Henry T. Finck; The
Nation, November 4th.
- The Playwright of Tomorrow, by W. J. Perlman; The
Dramatic Mirror, November 13th.
- Northampton's Newest Dramatic Venture, by Mary K.
Brewster; ditto, November 27th.
- A Poverty of New Things, by Metcalfe; Life, November
11th.
- Abelard and Heloise*, a play by Percy Shostac, The Play-
book.
- The French Theatre in New York; Theatre, November.
- Clothes and the Drama, by Alan Dale; ditto.
- If I were to Write a Play; ditto.
- Why Does the Sensuous Appeal Prevail on the Stage? by
Wm. de Wagstaffe; ditto.
- Reviews of the productions and the books of the month;
The Dramatist, October.
- Two Choruses from *Iphigenia in Tauris*, by Witter Byn-
ner; The Forum, November.
- The Happy Ending as the First Requisite of a War Time
Play; Current Opinion, November.
- The Gargantuan Note in the Newest Type of Theatrical
Entertainment; ditto.
- Pavlova and Possibilities; Harper's Weekly, November 6th.
- Why I Want to Play Emma McChesney, by Ethel Barry-
more; The American, November.
- On Reading a Play; The Unpopular Review, October-De-
cember.

The Washington Square Players; The Little Review, November.

Venice Preserved, tragedy in five acts by Hugo von Hofmannsthal; Poet Lore, Autumn Number.

Hugo von Hofmannsthal, by Elisabeth Walter; ditto.

Filmland as It Was and Is, by Chas. E. Van Loan; Collier's, December 18th.

William Gillette, by Clayton Hamilton; ditto.

The Early Crop of Plays, by Heywood Broun; ditto.

The Seven Arts, by James Huneker; Puck, December 4th.

On With the Dance, by Anthony M. Rud; The Illustrated World, December.

"C. F.," by John D. Williams; The Century, December.

Rupert Brooke, by John Drinkwater; The Forum, December.

Baconizing Shakespeare, by James Phinney Baxter; The Dial, December 9th.

Exegi Monumentum: Rupert Brooke, by Charles H. A. Wager; ditto, December 23d.

Shakespeare and the New Psychology, by S. A. Tannenbaum; ditto.

Actor Snatching and the Movies, by Walter Pritchard Eaton; The American, December.

Why We Go to the Movies, by Hugo Münsterberg; Cosmopolitan, December.

The Life of Charles Frohman (serial), by Daniel Frohman and Isaac F. Marcossan; ditto.

The Psychology of Carmen, by Geraldine Farrar; The Bookman, December.

America as Host to the Ballet Russe; Vogue, December 15th.

What a "Fellah" May Know of Dundreary; Literary Digest, December 18th.

Vagrant Memories; The Nation, December 9th.

Foibles of First Night Audiences, by Alan Dale; The Theatre, December.

Emily Stevens, a Cerebral Actress, by Ada Patterson; ditto.

Geo. M. Cohan and Percy MacKaye, Collaborators, by Alfred Grunberg; ditto.

The Garden Terrace Theatre, by J. M. Hanson; ditto.

Do Motion Pictures Mean the Death of the Drama? ditto.

Rupert Brooke and Stephen Phillips, *The Outlook*, December 22d.

REVIEWS OF PRODUCTIONS

- An Ideal Husband*; *The New Republic*, November 6th.
The Eternal Magdalene; ditto, November 13th.
Overtones, The Great Lover and The Liars; ditto, November 20th.
Hobson's Choice, The Eternal Magdalene and Around the Map; *The Nation*, November 11th.
The Great Lover, The Liars, Fair and Warmer, The Angel in The House and Secret Service; ditto, November 18th.
When the Young Vine Blooms and Abe and Mawruss; ditto, November 25th.
A Little Bit of All Sorts, by Metcalfe; *Life*, December 4th.
Hobson's Choice, The Eternal Magdalene and The Angel in the House; ditto, November 18th.
The Great Lover, The Liars and Overtones; ditto, November 27th.
Young America; *Current Opinion*, November.
Our Mrs. McChesney and Adelaide; *Harper's Weekly*, November 6th.
Hobson's Choice, The Eternal Magdalene; ditto, November 20th.
Fair and Warmer, The Liars and The Great Lover; ditto, November 27th.
 Seen on the Stage (review of the current musical productions), by Clayton Hamilton; *Vogue*, November 15th.
 Seen on the Stage, by Clayton Hamilton; ditto, November 1.
 High Comedy in America (review of the current productions), by Clayton Hamilton; *Bookman*, November.
Lithuania, by Rupert Brooke; *The Little Review*, November.
John Ferguson, by St. John Ervine; *The Athenaeum*, December 11th.
The Chief and Our American Cousin; *Life*, December 9th.
The Weavers; ditto, December 30th.
Peter Pan, The Weavers, Katinka and Ruggles of Red Gap; *The Nation*, December 20th.
The Unborn; *The New Republic*, December 4th.
When the Young Vine Blooms; ditto, December 11th.
Major Barbara; ditto, December 18th.

The Weavers; ditto, December 25th.
The Chief; Harper's Weekly, December 4th.
Romeo and Juliet; ditto, December 11th.
Treasure Island and *The Ware Case*; ditto, December 18th.
Major Barbara; ditto, December 25th.
 Strategy and Tactics in the Drama (review of the current productions), by Clayton Hamilton; *The Bookman*, December.
 Seen on the Stage, by Clayton Hamilton; *Vogue*, December 15th.
 New Productions in London, by Wm. Archer; *The Nation*, December 9th.
Treasure Island; Sothorn as Dundreary and *The Ware Case*; ditto.
Major Barbara; ditto, December 16th.
 The New Plays; *The Theatre*, December.

REVIEWS OF THE PRINTED PLAY AND BOOKS ON THE THEATRE.

The Faithful; *The Nation*, November 11th.
Pleasures and Palaces; ditto, November 25th.
 The New Drama in English, by Helen McAfee; (*The Case of American Drama and British and American Drama of Today*); *The Dial*, November 11th.
 Classics on the Art of Acting, by Hobart Chatfield-Taylor; (The University of Columbia's four pamphlets on acting); ditto, December 9th.
Jane Clegg, Five Masques (Stevens and Goodman), and *British and American Drama of Today*; *The Nation*, December 23d.

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THE

DRAMA

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

Remy de Gourmont,

By Richard Aldington

THEODAT

THE OLD KING

Two Plays, by Remy de Gourmont

The Italian Stage Today,

By Charles Lemmi

The Story of the Hull House Players,

By Laura Dainty Pelham

Common Sense and Playwriting,

A Review, by Howard J. Savage

The Cinematograph as Art,

By Alexander Bakshy

The Unchastened Woman,

A Review, by Anna Nathan Meyer

On the Highway,

A Dramatic Sketch, by Anton Chekhov

Recent Magazine Articles on the Drama

MAY

No. 22 1916

"Et j'ai voulu la paix"

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· A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

May, 1916

THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

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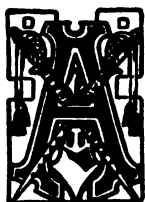
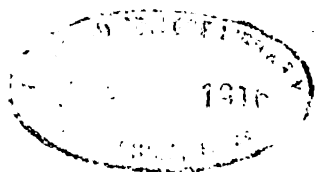
1916

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From a figure by Anne Whitney, sculptor
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ANNE WHITNEY, the sculptor of this figure of Shakespeare, was born in Watertown, Mass., in 1821, and died in 1915, aged ninety-three. She was the youngest of her family, and kept her youthful vitality to an extraordinary age; at eighty she had the physique of a woman of sixty, and no one who saw her in her nineties will ever forget her brilliant dark eyes, her abundant white hair, her strong, delicately-cut features, and the vivacity of her bearing. She was in her early years the friend and comrade of those men and women who were fighting the battles of suffrage and of anti-slavery, Maria Chapman, Wendell Phillips, William Lloyd Garrison, and others. She was devoted to the religious and philosophical ideas of Emerson, as were so many eager minds of that period, and her first expression of herself was through poetry; her poems, collected and published in 1859, were privately reprinted in 1906. Clay she did not touch until she was in middle life, and she seems to have worked out her own methods with little help from teachers; she studied under no great master. She went to Rome to work, and later had a studio near Paris for a brief period; but much of her work was done in her own studio in Belmont, Mass., after her return to America. Among her productions are the bust of Keats at Hampstead, England; the statue of Samuel Adams in the Capitol at Washington, a replica of which is in Adams Square, Boston; the figure of the Norse sea-rover, Leif Ericson, which stands near the head of Commonwealth Ave-

nue, Boston, shading his eyes and looking west; and the seated Sumner in front of the Harvard Law School at Cambridge. Her statue of Harriet Martineau at Wellesley College was destroyed by fire with the College Hall in 1914, but Wellesley still possesses a small bronze of Roma by Miss Whitney. Chicago has only the bust of Frances Willard in the Art Institute.

In this figure of Shakespeare, Miss Whitney intended to reveal the dramatist with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in his thoughts; the outline of Bottom wearing his ass's ears is scratched on the base of the fountain against which Shakespeare leans; and she herself said, in Shakespearean phrase, to a group of friends, as she pointed to the half-mocking, half-meditative mouth of the poet, "What fools these mortals be!"

The figure is about three feet high. Since Miss Whitney's death it has been in the keeping of Miss Vida Dutton Scudder of Wellesley, Mass., to whose kindness we owe the privilege of publishing this reproduction.

The reproductions here exhibited will appear also in the organ of the Eleanor Association.

THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

No. 22

May

1916

REMY DE GOURMONT

I



REMY DE GOURMONT will never be a popular author—it was the last thing in the world he wanted to be—not even with the finer sort of popularity which men like Robert Browning and Gustave Flaubert have achieved. Browning and Flaubert are typical of the really great author whose work, at first sneered at or ignored, is recognized by all later and less prejudiced generations as being of supreme beauty. Gourmont very much despised the facile popularity of the mob author; he was too modest to presume that he would occupy the position of arbiter to future generations; he wrote for himself and his friends, for an *élite* which was the finest of its time.

He was undoubtedly a great master, but he is largely read and appreciated by other authors and artists, not by the generality of mankind. He reflects the influences of his epoch; he did not create one. Like Browning and Flaubert he was at first misunderstood, is still misunderstood, was slow to win appreciation, yet did win it from very many critics of distinction. His name stands for fine work, for a fine standard of literature; he is known to men

of letters the world over; but he is not one of the great creators. His work is critical not creative; even in his poems, novels and plays—not the most considerable part of his work—the spirit is largely critical.

Miss Lowell, in her clever essay* on Remy de Gourmont, hints that she feels his versatility to be the chief cause of his comparative inferiority—an inferiority which places him just below the great creators, though vastly above the horde of imitators. I think she is right: as a poet, Remy de Gourmont beautifully carried out theories which were current in his time; he did not create like Rimbaud or Laforgue, or Mallarmé; as a “cerebral” novelist he has not Huysmans’ rasping verve and exasperated precision of epithet; as a sceptic philosopher, he has Anatole France for rival; as a naturalist, as a writer on sex, he has Fabre and Havelock Ellis before him; as a dramatist, he owes a deal to Maeterlinck; even as a prose stylist one hesitates to place him above Henri de Régnier; only as a critic of literature, as an exponent of aesthetic scholarship is he really unrivalled—the two *Livres des Masques*, the five volumes of the *Promenades Littéraires* and *Le Latin Mystique* are marvels of critical insight. He defined and defended Symbolism as no other writer has done or could have done.†

All these great names which I have been quoting are of men who were his contemporaries, and whose diverse talents are, as it were, synthesised in the work of one man of their period—Remy de Gourmont. That is what I am trying to get at—he is

* *Six French Poets*, by Amy Lowell (Macmillan, 1915).

† His essay on Maeterlinck, published in *THE DRAMA* for May, 1915, is sufficient example of de Gourmont’s brilliant critical abilities. Although written many years ago, it remains one of the best studies of Maeterlinck’s personality.

the synthesis of a great period of intellectual activity (1885-1914), inferior perhaps to some of his contemporaries in their own particular sphere, but superior to them all in the width of his interests and in the diversity of his accomplishments. If he was not supreme in any one branch of literary creation, there exists none in which he has not achieved fine, sometimes magnificent, work.

Subtlety, complexity—an over-subtlety which leads him to paradox, to espouse always the “other side” of a question (against the majority), to prefer an original half-truth to an accepted truism, to abandon the normal for the curious; a complexity which is sometimes impossible to disentangle, a complexity which he sometimes resented himself—these are the two salient characteristics of Remy de Gourmont. To expose all the threads of this multiform personality is perhaps impossible; to gain an adequate notion of his mind from reading one or two of his works is indeed impossible; and to present him primarily as a dramatist would be false. His four dramas, *Lilith*, *Théodat*, *Phénissa*, and *Le Vieux Roi*, are merely part of the output of an immensely active intelligence, constantly preoccupied with reflection and imaginings, but too restless, too complex, to concentrate a life-work on any one subject or branch of literature.

II

Remy de Gourmont was born on the 4th of April, 1858, in the Chateau de la Motte at Bazoches-en-Houle (Orne); he died* in his apartment in Paris on September 27, 1915, a last flicker of his eyelids

* See *La France* for September 30, and October 2, 1915, for an account of his death and the funeral speeches.

telling those by his bed-side that he had heard and understood the news that the French had taken 20,000 prisoners in their attack in Champagne. So much desired that news of victory by the ex-champion of sceptical anti-patriotism!*

I do not propose to enter very far into the private life of Monsieur de Gourmont, for there is always something indelicate in these indiscreet probings into other people's affairs, and, at present, there is not much to recount.† M. Jean de Gourmont is, I believe, writing a life of his distinguished brother, and that, when it appears, will tell us as much or as little as he thinks fit. For present purposes I am making use of the short biographical essay of Messieurs Van Bever and Léautaud.‡

During the war of 1870-1871 Remy de Gourmont, then a boy of twelve, was initiated into the charms of Molière by an old curé who took charge of his education when all the schools were shut. The same curé taught him Latin. Remy de Gourmont mentions these little facts in one of his essays, and it is characteristic of him that he should remember the war partly because he learnt to appreciate literature during its progress. It is not unlikely, though, that his subsequent attitude towards life, towards literature and towards international politics, was influenced by unrecounted experiences during that war.

* See the article, *Le Joujou Patriotisme*, *Mercure de France* (April, 1891), so reasonable in tone that one cannot understand the fuss it caused. It has been recently used very unjustly against de Gourmont.

† An article by M. Matisse in a recent number of the *Cambridge Magazine* contains an interesting personal sketch of Remy de Gourmont.

‡ See *Poètes d'Aujourd'hui*: Ad. van Bever & P. Léautaud (Paris, *Mercure de France*, 21st ed. 1910). This collection contains many of M. de Gourmont's best poems. It is indispensable to anyone who wishes to study modern French poetry.

To avoid further footnotes I will cite two other books: *Préférences*, by Paul Escoube (*Mercure de France*), and *Remy de Gourmont*, by P. de Querlon (Sansot 1903). Both should be consulted.

In 1883 he entered the Bibliothèque Nationale, where he remained until 1891, laying the foundation of that immense scholarship—in the best sense of the word—which he afterwards put to such excellent use. During these first years at the Bibliothèque he produced three or four books of no great merit, among them his first novel, *Merlette*, which does not rank among his best productions. In December, 1889, appeared the first number of the (subsequently) great review, *Le Mercure de France*, of which Remy de Gourmont was a founder and possibly chief contributor. His real career as a writer begins then.

To appreciate this review's importance and to make clear the position of Remy de Gourmont in modern literature it will be as well if I give a slight, though necessarily imperfect account of the developments of French literature at the time.

Before the Symbolistes the two schools of French literature were, in poetry, the Parnassiens, and in prose, the Naturalistes. That is not perhaps strictly accurate because some of the Parnassiens were very fine prose writers (I need mention only Anatole France) and some of the Naturalistes wrote poetry: but it will serve. Symbolisme, which appeared at the time of a great revolution, is really only a development of the two earlier schools. The Symbolistes reproached the Parnassiens for their frigidity and the Naturalistes for their boring "vérisme," but they (the Symbolistes) were indebted to the Parnassiens for their romantic tradition and love of beauty and to the Naturalistes for their technique and hatred of modern civilization. (It must also be remembered that French poetry till the late eighties and even afterwards was dominated by the "figure" of Victor Hugo, much as English poetry of the time was dominated by Tennyson.)

The Naturalistes, being widely-read novelists, naturally made more noise than the Parnassien poets, Banville, Hérédia, Leconte de Lisle and their entourage. The Naturalistes, headed by Zola, did succeed eventually in making a great stir in the world—though Mr. George Moore is no doubt right when he says that Zola was merely a prodigious journalist re-writing Flaubert. At any rate from about 1872 to 1885 the Naturalistes were the vital influence in French literature and Zola gathered about him many of the most talented young men of the time. Yet the most powerful influences today are the “outsiders,” Verlaine, Rimbaud, Mallarmé!

Among Zola’s “young men” one of the most talented was Joris Karl Huysmans. After writing one or two extra Naturaliste works, such as *En Ménage*, *Les Soeurs Vatar*, and *Sac au Dos* (all very fine), Huysmans threw off the bondage of “realism” and in 1884 produced that curious book, *A Rebours*. It was something of a blow to Zola. It had eventually a very great influence on the young writers and on de Gourmont in particular.

All this of course went on rather behind the scenes, so to speak; the big reviews and papers began to take Naturalisme seriously when it had done its best work; Mr. George Moore came back to England and announced its advent when it was all over; Heaven knows when it really struck America. In 1886 a young man named Baju founded a periodical which he called *Le Décadent*, whose editorials might have been written by the perfect decadent himself, Des Esseintes, the hero of Huysmans’ *A Rebours*. In this amusing little rag some of the finest poets of the late nineteenth century appeared; to mention only a few: Mallarmé, Verlaine, Laurent Tailhade, Jules Laforgue, and among prose writers Villiers de L’Île

Adam, Barbey d'Aurévilly and Huysmans himself. It is rather odd to reflect that the prejudices against these writers, whom we now know to be very considerable artists, should have forced them to contribute to a puerile little journal like Baju's *Décadent*.

The new school of writers, christened "Les Décadents" by their opponents, began to found periodicals of their own. Many of them died early deaths, but one, *Le Mercure de France* (founded 1889), has lived and prospered and brings us closely in touch with the subject of this article—Remy de Gourmont, at that time greatly under the influence of Huysmans, Mallarmé and Verlaine.

It may, perhaps, be not out of place here to insist on the importance of the young reviews in the study of recent French literature. They are the best, most accurate, and most charming guides to the development, changes and accomplishments of the literature of the period. Practically every writer of talent first appears in their pages; they were the first to print many works now famous, then despised; and many excellent morsels of literary craftsmanship lie buried in their pages. No public library and few individuals possess these faded periodicals, but Remy de Gourmont preserved very many, and several times in his literary essays he insists on their importance.*

In his essay on the *Mercure de France*,† which everyone ought to read, Remy de Gourmont relates how the *Mercure* evolved out of two earlier periodicals: *La Pléiade*, which published Maeterlinck's first story (1886) and *Scapin*, whose editor was M. Alfred Valette, now for twenty-five years editor of *Le Mercure de France*. Certain young French writers,

* See *Les Jeunes Revues*; preface by Remy de Gourmont and de Gourmont's essays on The Symbolistes.

† *Promenades Littéraires*, Essay *Le Mercure de France*. 1912.

enthusiastic for the new imaginative art, though far from considering themselves Symbolistes, determined to found a magazine. Among them were Remy de Gourmont, Louis Dumur, Jules Renard (author of *Poil de Carotte*), and of course, Alfred Valette; closely associated with them were Madame Rachilde, the novelist, and Laurent Tailhade. Other writers joined them later. Of these founders the most famous today is Remy de Gourmont. For over twenty years hardly a number of the *Mercure de France* appeared without a contribution from him. In the essay mentioned above, M. de Gourmont attributes the success of the *Mercure* first to M. Valette's brilliant editorship and then to the marvellous ballades of Laurent Tailhade, to Renard's little plays and afterwards to Pierre Louys' *Aphrodite*; but those who know the *Mercure* well will feel that this is Remy de Gourmont's modesty, for he was certainly the greatest pillar of the review. There must have been many people who bought it just for the sake of his contributions.

I cannot afford more space for this sketch of the development of modern French literature, but I would like to add this: classification of authors by "schools" is as idiotic as most classification, and as dull. Romantics, Parnassiens, Naturalistes and Symbolistes—just as Futuristes, Unanimistes and Imagists of today—are merely convenient terms for designating the collective effort of certain artists towards the attainment and establishment of a certain ideal of their art. While this effort is going on the artists are hidden in a cloud of combat, calumny and misunderstanding. The sins of one imbecile are visited upon the heads of ten men of talent. It is only when the fracas is calmed down that the real personalities emerge; the hangers-on are forgotten;

and the genuineness of the real artists is manifest. Who remembers now that Victor Hugo was called every sort of idiot and liar, and said to be incapable, and a perverter of youth in his early days? No one. We scarcely think of him in connection with the excesses of the Romantic movement. So it is with the Symbolistes; and just as we can see now that the Romantic movement was a development and not a revolution, so Symbolistes, Parnassiens and Naturalistes of the seventies, eighties and nineties are all inter-related and so far from being inimical to each other, it is now impossible to determine where one ends and another begins.

III

That is, as nearly as a foreigner can hope to render it, my impression of Remy de Gourmont's literary milieu; you will have to wait until Mr. F. S. Flint writes his book on modern French poetry for the whole complicated situation to be unraveled. I am willing to confess that I am a little overwhelmed by the mass of "documents" and the bulk of talented work of this period which one ought to study.

I shall try to give an idea of Remy de Gourmont's work, by citing not the titles and contents of his forty odd volumes, but characteristic passages from his work at different periods. I want to show how his mind and art developed from the rather flowery beauties of early Symbolism to the clear thinking and clear writing of his mature period.

Imagine Remy de Gourmont about the year 1890. He is just over thirty, learned from his studies; he has forgotten his early attempts at writing—his *Chez les Lapons* and similar books—has read and digested *A Rebours*, knows Huysmans personally, and is writing *Le Latin Mystique*, one of his most

interesting works. He is young and enthusiastic. He has just brought out *Sixtine*, dedicated to another of his admirations, Villiers, a book which has obvious debts to *A Rebours*, but which shows a very distinct originality in the author. Already his character as a writer and his future development are sketched—his philosophical scepticism, his irony—his beloved irony!—his “cerebral” sensuality, his academic joy over church ceremonies and more than academic admiration of church literature, and his keen analytic power, for the moment rather overlaid with the fantasy and purple diction of the early Symbolistes. His *Litanies*, the prose tales, and the little play, *Phénissa*, now collected in *Le Pèlerin du Silence* were all written and produced between 1891 and 1896. The *Litanies de la Rose* have been several times quoted recently. They show a close study of mediæval Latin séquaires, an admiration for Mallarmé, and a florid beauty of diction very rare in French literature:

“Rose verte, rose couleur de mer, O nombril des sirènes, rose verte, gemme ondoyante et fabuleuse, tu n’es plus que de l’eau dès qu’un doigt t’a touchée, fleur hypocrite, fleur du silence.”

There are many beautiful strophes in these *Litanies*, in the *Fleurs de Jadis* and the *Dit des Arbres*. The *Saintes du Paradis* is a sequence of short poems on female saints and is distinctly more austere than the *Litanies*. Compare these earlier poems with the *Saintes* or with the fine sonnet *Le Soir dans un Musée*; the increase of mastery is decisive.

“Bergère née en Lorraine,
Jeanne qui avec gardé les moutons en robe de futaine,
Et qui avec pleuré aux misères du peuple de France,

Et qui avec conduit le Roi à Reims parmi les lances,
Jeanne qui étiez un arc, une croix, un glaive, un cœur,
une lance,
Jeanne que les gens aimaient comme leur père et leur
mère,
Jeanne blessée et prise, mise au cachot par les
Anglais,
Jeanne brûlée à Rouen par les Anglais,
Jeanne qui ressemblez à un ange en colère,
Jeanne d'Arc, mettez beaucoup de colère dans nos
cœurs.

That is written by the man to whom many people still deny the title of poet and who was accused by imbeciles of not loving his country! There are other and nobler ways of loving one's country than brandishing an abstract sword in the columns of newspapers—Remy de Gourmont was too humane and too educated to like war, but he did sincerely love France.

To continue the discussion of his work, take the first sentence of *Le Pèlerin du Silence* (1892) and compare it with a sentence in any of his later works, say the essay, *Une Religion d'Art* from *La Culture des Idées* (1900). The first runs:

“Le blond troupeau bourdonne autour du fier sultan, du sultan aux cornes d'argent: c'est Tauris, courtié de plus de collines que l'amour n'amène d'amoureuses, que la peur ne presse de peureuses aux flancs du mâle flamboyant.”

The second runs:

“A une époque où presque toute la sensibilité, presque toute la foi, presque tout l'amour se sont réfugiés dans l'art, et où, par surcroît, ce mot, jadis

mystérieux et pur, se trouve compromis en plus d'une aventure, il nous manquait, évidemment, à côté de la religion de l'art, la religion d'art."

If anyone doubts that the second is better and subtler prose than the first let him translate them both, trying to obtain a precisely similar effect in English. The first, in spite of its assonances and internal rhymes, is ten times easier to write.

One more remark—quite malapropos; any publisher who would bring out a good English translation of the *Promenades Littéraires* would be doing a service to international letters, to the education of the Anglo-Saxon world, and would put before everyone's eyes some of the finest models of criticism of the last century. The Anglo-Saxon loves to "criticise." That is, to show his superiority by finding fault with people immensely superior to himself; it would be very good for him to absorb the fact that five volumes of *appreciative* criticism have been written by so fine an artist, so delicate a connoisseur, so uncompromising a craftsman, as Remy de Gourmont.

IV

Remy de Gourmont wrote four plays, *Théodat* (1888), *Lilith* (1891-2), *Phénissa* (1893) and *Le Vieux Roi* (1897).

It would be incorrect to represent de Gourmont as a man exclusively or even very deeply preoccupied with drama. But it is also clear that a mind so curious of everything would be certain to experiment in dramatic form. That he wrote four plays proves that his dramatic work was something more than an experiment. He is essentially a literary dramatist, by which I mean that he considered the drama primarily and perhaps wholly as a form of

literature and not as an art in itself, as modern critics quite properly insist that it is. One of his plays, *Lilith*, is quite unplayable and was never intended to be played. *Théodat* was played in Paris many years ago, but I cannot find that the other two plays were ever produced. So you will see that as a dramatist, as indeed in almost everything, Remy de Gourmont was rather caviar to the general.

Théodat, the earliest of his plays, is in some ways the best, and is remarkable for the comparative maturity it shows. Since *Théodat* is printed here my comments are unnecessary, except perhaps in one or two points. The tragedy turns about a somewhat out-of-the-ordinary situation, placed in a century (the sixth) which has not been at all over-run by the average novelist and dramatist. In the sixth century the question of the celibacy of the clergy was still a very thorny one in the Western Empire. Popes and Councils had enacted different ordinances on the subject and great confusion prevailed. Apparently—I say apparently for I have no particular knowledge of early church history—clerks were allowed to marry at this time but not bishops, and if a clerk became a bishop it was not uncommon, if he were married, for him to repudiate his wife in order to show his piety. At least that is the situation as I gather it from Remy de Gourmont's play. It is quite certain that he would not have written it unless he had discovered full justification for it in ancient chronicles and church histories. The whole thing is one of those bizarre and curious situations which de Gourmont loved above everything. (The mixture of churchly asceticism and of sensuality is so characteristic of him that someone has described him as a cross between a satyr and a Benedictine monk.) His love of the church, its literature, traditions, and

ceremonies was, at any rate partially, derived from his friend, Huysmans, and sex as a motive was one of the strongest features of the Naturalistes.

Remy de Gourmont probably did not believe anything; he was interested in everything, and he saw in the church and in church history a source of literature which had been greatly neglected. It is incorrect to represent Remy de Gourmont as wilfully trampling on sacred things; he had more respect for the church than some of its members. But he was an artist primarily and when he wished to work out some situation he did not hesitate to use Christianity for his background and to use it just as it pleased him. The sins of the flesh, he says in *Le Matin Mystique*, have been inveighed against by moralists, Christian and non-Christian, in all ages and times; you must not blame me if they are often referred to in these pages. That is his apology and I think a just one. It may not be conventional good morals to show a Catholic bishop seduced from his vow of celibacy by a woman and that woman his own wife (which one would think sufficient excuse), but it is human nature. The contest between the spiritual man and the natural or animal man, is as old as the intellect; in *Théodat* Remy de Gourmont gives a rather special example and gives it well. The play has obvious defects, the chief being the over-duration of the first incident, the too literary talk on heresies and the too "symbolical" enumeration of the properties of the holy vestments. On the other hand the woman's temptation of *Théodat* is a great deal more human and subtle than, for example, the rather trivial "temptations," of *Salomé* in Oscar Wilde's play, or even in Flaubert's tale, for that matter. Maximienne is a more or less vital and credible person, for Remy de Gourmont really did

know something, even so early as this, of feminine psychology, and later in life his wisdom and tolerance in these matters made one of the amiable sides of his character.

Lilith is simply the Bible story of Adam and Eve retold in dramatic form with great literary skill after a study of mystic or uncanonical works like the Kabbala, the Talmud, and the Apocrypha. It might be briefly described as a mediæval mystery rewritten and commented on by a sensual sceptic. It is important to admirers of Remy de Gourmont as a turning point in his literary development. It marked a considerable advance in his art, but is most certainly not meat for babes or *jeunes filles*—those chains on free literature whose influence has been analyzed by de Gourmont in one of the most deliciously ironical of his essays.

La Princesse Phénissa and *Le Vieux Roi* fall naturally into another category. There is nothing of the church about them; they show a more developed, more philosophical mind and a greater mastery of literary technique. They are examples of Symbolisme at its best, and Maeterlinck would not have been ashamed to own them. In each there is a definite philosophical idea worked out originally and skillfully. The *Princesse Phénissa* would be effective, though rather harrowing, if played. It is simply a symbolical working out of the tragedy of youth sacrificed to the selfishness of age. A queen has a lover and a beautiful, young, selfless daughter. The queen makes her lover marry her daughter, the princess. Phénissa then grows jealous, wants her lover back, and persuades him to murder his wife, for if he does, by some mysterious manner he will gain for himself, now growing old, the years which would have been hers and her child's. The poor princess and her un-

born child are murdered—it is the past murdering the future; it is a symbol of what Europe is today. People talk about the selfishness of youth; but the selfishness of the aged is infinitely more horrible and more destructive. Remy de Gourmont's *Phénissa* does show under all its pomp and stiff brocades of Symbolisme this eternal struggle. When he wrote it I do not think he was conscious of its full significance, but it has certainly a bitter and obvious interpretation today.

The latest of his plays, *Le Vieux Roi*, was written nearly ten years after the first. He had had plenty of time to increase his knowledge of life and character. Here, as always, he is attracted by the strange and the abnormal. All through the play are veiled or direct references to curious passions; he does not hesitate to reveal thoughts and desires which are most often neglected or shunned by authors. In *Le Vieux Roi*, which I have translated for *The Drama*, many people will doubtless see a likeness to *King Lear*, and in a sense de Gourmont has re-written Shakespeare's play from a modern standpoint. It is like the modern Russian novel of "futility"; no one gets what he wants: the Old King dies by accident, Yoland is killed by Gautier, Guislaine kills herself from grief, Floraine loses Yoland, Gautier becomes king but does not get Floraine, and Germaine loses her sister, Guislaine, the person she loved most on earth. It is a sombre little tragedy, with some very beautiful writing in it.

V

In introducing these plays to English-speaking readers—they have never before been translated—I feel justified in claiming attention for them first on account of their very real merit and secondly be-

cause they are part, and only a small part, of the work of a master in literature. The work of Remy de Gourmont must be studied in its bulk before his real importance emerges. He belonged to a generation which is disappearing, whose influence in literature is declining, but that clear, sceptical, ironic mind can never lose its charm, never lose its real value. The men who direct the political destinies of Europe are uneducated and unintelligent besides a man of his capacity, and it is a melancholy reflection that our age could make so slight a practical use of so magnificent a brain. In one of his little essays Remy de Gourmont says that if all men thought as he the world would be so quiet that even in Paris one would be able to hear the hum of flies; if all men had thought as Remy de Gourmont there would have been no European war.

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

THEODAT*

A Play in One Act, translated from the French of
Remy de Gourmont by Richard Aldington.

THE PEOPLE OF THE PLAY.

THEODAT, Bishop of Clermont.

MARTIAL.

PAULINUS.

FLAVIEN.

TIBURTIUS.

VALERIUS.

Ordained Clerks.

MAXIMIENNE.

The Porter of the Basilica.

The year 570 of Our Lord, at Clermont in the Arvernes, in the episcopal palace, which is a dependence of the Basilica.

(*Theodat* was represented at the Théâtre Moderne—under the auspices of the Théâtre d'Art, on the 11th of December, 1891, under the direction of M. Paul Fort; the part of Theodat was taken by M. Lugné-Poe and that of Maximienne by Mlle. Camée; the decorations and costumes were designed by M. Maurice Devis.)

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THEODAT

BY REMY DE GOURMONT.

Authorized Translation by Richard Aldington.

A large hall with Roman embrasures, narrow, high and deep. The walls are covered with arras and the ceiling with painted cloth: on the dark yellow arras red lions dart out their tongues like flames and the blue of the painted cloth is sowed with gold stars, like the heavens, and with gold crosses, like Paradise.

All round the walls is a bench covered with purple drapery and cut in four places: by the bronze bed which slopes from the head to the foot—the bed is large with a single pillow and over it hangs a lamp of red clay; by the high chimney lighted with enormous beech logs and resinous pine-trunks; by the painted chest on which scenes from the Gospels are drawn in bright colours; by an organ built into the wall facing the chimney.

The tiles of the floor are octagonal in shape. In front of the bed there is a four-legged stool with a step to kneel on and in front of the fire a small bench with a back.

The Bishop is dressed in a green episcopal robe, half-hidden by the white gold-bordered dalmatic. He is kneeling with his head in his hands, resting upon the stool.

The Clerks, in their white tunics, are also praying and kneel in front of the circular bench.

The day is ending: Paulinus, at a sign from the Bishop, lights the clay lamp, for it is not good that men in company should remain in darkness; but the

hearth lights the great hall more than the little lamp; at its large and momentary flickerings, the lions waver, the stars glimmer, the gold crosses of the ceiling radiate.

There is silence except for the spluttering of the wick in the beech-oil, the mutter of the fire, the low murmur of the slow praying voices, the suppressed sighs from hearts smitten by anguish.

THEODAT. Ah! I am troubled by this anniversary. I cannot pray. O God, help me!

His forehead rests on the stool and a deep sigh comes from his mouth. Theodat is forty years old, tall, well-built, firmly muscled, swarthy, with a Roman profile; his eyes, blue like a Gaul's, slightly hidden, reveal themselves in sudden flashes; his close-shaven hair looks like a black skull-cap. He looks born to be the commander of a cohort rather than the commander of a legion of souls, but the ecclesiastical life has suppressed his nature, softened his gestures, given moderation to his movements. He was chosen bishop for the great rank of his family, for his theological knowledge, for his general kindness which pleased the common people, for the frankness of his speech and the uprightness of his spirit.

THEODAT. [*Lifting his head and murmuring to himself.*] Why is it that I cannot pray? When Prudentius, ninth successor of Austremoine, consecrated me before his death, I gave into his holy hands my joys, all the joys of this world, all my joys, and now like returned exiles they beat at my door. I had sworn, and on the day of my enthroning my house was closed to her whom God had given me for wife when I was only a clerk of the Lord. Day for day, that was a year ago, on the Feast of Saint Etienne, the first martyr of Christ; and from that day I have never weakened, but now I feel my heart

escaping me and going, like a dog that has lost its master, to howl over the absent man's traces. Where is she now? What has happened to the houseless wife, to the living man's widow? If I could but see her, just a look, just for the time in which to say an "Our Father" to drive away temptation! "The Bishop shall not receive his wife into his house." But outside the house. The Bishop has no wife; he belongs to all; if he be married, "let his wife be as a sister unto him." That cannot be. The grace of God even could not overcome so continuous a temptation. To expose oneself to it would be a perpetual sin. She has gone; it had to be. Ah God! if I were only a simple priest or a humble clerk again, an eternal postulant, a chaste Christian! What have I said? Lord, pardon me. Have pity upon me, O Lord.

[*Louder.*] Martial, go to the organ. We will sing the Kyrie Eleison, that God may take pity upon the sinner, your Bishop.

They sing the Kyrie Eleison. THEODAT leaves the stool and kneels on the tiled floor with his head upon the ground.

THEODAT. [*Raising himself.*] I confess to Almighty God that I have sinned in thought, word and deed—O my sins, my sins, my very great sins!

As he speaks these last words in a deep voice, the Bishop strikes his breast three times.

THE CLERKS. [*Striking their breasts.*] O my sins, my sins, my very great sins!

THEODAT. Almighty God have mercy upon us and forgive us our sins and lead us to eternal life!

THE CLERKS. Amen.

THEODAT. Almighty and Most-merciful God, grant us indulgence, absolution and remission of our sins.

THE CLERKS. Amen.

[The Bishop rises from his knees and stands beside the small bench near the fire.]

THEODAT. Come, my children, and listen to me.

[The clerks assemble before him.]

I have still many admonishments to make to you who will soon be my vicars. You know what duties the Church imposes upon those who assume the priesthood: I speak of the strict duties, the primordial duties of every priest called to direct an assembly of the faithful. Martial, what are those duties?

MARTIAL. Residence, Prayer, Preaching, the Administration of the Sacraments, the Correction of Morals.

THEODAT. That is correct; you know the letter of the law, but remember and let you all remember to keep it graven upon your hearts, upon your heads and upon your limbs. Love, believe, act. Be ceaselessly in the midst of your flock, like true shepherds. Pray the Most High to deliver them from temptation. Announce the good news to them continually with untiring voice. Fortify their human weakness with the balm of the Sacraments. Watch, lest any lamb stray from the fold.

Watch over yourselves also my children. You are young; and the misfortunes of the time oblige me to consecrate you at the earliest age permitted by the canons: the pastures lack shepherds, or rather apostles—for what barbarism still remains! what paganism hidden under the foliage of Christian practices, like a serpent! what sacrilegious adorations! what dark and devilish superstitions! But the Lord will gird your loins: you will be strong against the flesh; you will be strong against the mind.

Fear the mind above all; fear pride which eats the sword of faith like rust. My children, be priests;

be not theologians. Of what service are vain discussions, if you desire to follow in all things the ruling of the Councils? If you depart from them, you fall into the depths of infinite perdition. Watch, but beware lest the dawn find you meditating on the Monade and on the Trinity. Remember Arius. Believe that the Three are One, the One, Three. The Son had no beginning; at the price of your blood say not: "the Word was created."

MARTIAL. What blasphemy!

FLAVIEN. [*In a low voice.*] The Son is co-eternal with the Father. . . . The Son is co-eternal with the Father.

THEODAT. Yes, repeat that and speak it aloud: consubstantial and co-eternal: the Council of Nicea has declared it.

FLAVIEN. [*In a much lower voice.*] Consubstantial, yes; but co-eternal? Is it possible?

THEODAT. Avoid the heresy of Apollinarius, that the Word, that is to say, the Divinity, suffered, died and was resurrected.

PAULINUS. It is absurd to say that.

THEODAT. Believe and do not believe. Judge not. Beware lest in revolting against Apollinarius, you see two personages in Christ.

MARTIAL. Father, would that be denying the Trinity?

THEODAT. One single God and three persons; but distinguish persons and natures. Do not say with Eutyches: The human nature of Christ was absorbed by the divine nature like a drop of water by the sea. No, Christ was man and Christ was God: His body was not a vain appearance, an illusionary smoke: Man, he suffered in the human soul, in the human flesh.

TIBURTIVS. For how could God have suffered? Eutyches agrees with Apollinarius. . . .

THEODAT. Heresies are all related, being all daughters of lies.

VALERIUS. Father, help me in my difficulty: surely the sufferings of Christ greatly surpassed all human sufferings?

THEODAT. The God gave the Man strength to suffer more than man. You are subtle, Valerius. Take care, and do you all, my children, take care—since you are above the faithful through your priesthood—lest you come to believe yourselves above them through your knowledge and holiness. Never ask yourselves questions like those Valerius asks, if you have not the answer ready. And as for sanctity, remember that you have sinned as clerks and will sin as priests. Do not imagine, like Pelagius, that any man, whoever he may be, can live without sin. Do not question—as he and Coelestius do—original sin which has forever stained us: your strength is in your consciousness of your impurity. What should we be without grace? May the grace of God be upon us!

THE CLERKS. May the grace of God be upon us!

THEODAT. May it drive evil thoughts from your hearts! Listen to me. You, Tiburtius, and you, Flavien, are married. Govern your wives that your wives may not govern you. May they not be for you the occasion for sin but rather an armour against temptation and a buckler against carnal desires, the cup wherein you quench your thirst, not the amphora overflowing with drunkenness. Paulinus, have you sufficient strength to remain celibate? You know that once you have passed the grill of the Sanctuary, marriage is forbidden you forever!

PAULINUS. I hate womankind!

THEODAT. Do not speak thus: I am afraid for you. Today you hate woman—but tomorrow? Tomorrow, like so many others—alas! alas!—you will take a concubine. Remember that if the laws of the Church are indulgent to the feeble—ah! so feeble—flesh, God is terrible to those who sin beyond measure.

PAULINUS. Neither wife nor concubine; and if I were married, father, I would do as you have done—I would shut my door upon my wife. Let the priest at least give an example and live alone with God.

THEODAT. Eustathius! Have you listened to Eustathius? The rigid heretic whose rigour is only pride—has Eustathius disciples among us? No, it is not necessary to salvation that the Christians leave their wives, abandon earthly goods, pray night and day and fast every morning. The Christian life is not the monastic life.

PAULINUS. Yet renunciation is so beautiful. You yourself are an example.

THEODAT. Keep moderation in all things. And you, my Martial, adopted and well-beloved son of Prudentius?

MARTIAL. Father, I have not thought about these things. I will follow . . .

PAULINUS. [*To himself.*] Adopted or natural son? How the Church has degenerated!

MARTIAL. I will follow the straight way, with God's aid. I know no woman, save Priscilla, my mother, and I would love no one save Christ.

THEODAT. May your heart never have need of speaking to anyone save Christ only. Pray.

MARTIAL. I will pray, father.

THEODAT. And you, Valerius, will soon be married, I know.

VALERIUS. I have left my promised bride; I have left her for God.

THEODAT. But she?

VALERIUS. She has not understood my sacrifice.

THEODAT. Marry and wait a year. She loves you and I feel that you love her also.

VALERIUS. It is so good to hate her . . .

THEODAT. And you would be a priest! Reflect. Let there be no scandal. She whom you abandon as a promised bride, may be desired by you when she is a woman and you will not be able to take her save as your concubine. Ah! Valerius, have you the heart to degrade to that rank the noble girl who has vowed her life to you? I know how long such partings last and I know what they cost. Marry and return to me; I will welcome you, for you will be sheltered from sin. Go, my son; you are no longer a postulant to the priesthood. You weep, but how happy she will be. My sons, I wish to spare you the struggles I have suffered. God has helped me and I am saved, but at what a price! Fear women, ah, fear women!

PAULINUS. The fear of women is the beginning of wisdom.

THEODAT. Or rather the complement, Paulinus. But how delicate these matters are! Experience in life is difficult to acquire, more difficult to teach others. You would have to strip yourself naked; you have to scandalise the present to edify the future. O God, protect my flock as you have protected me.

THE CLERKS. Bless us, father.

[They are about to kneel down; the Bishop has half lifted his arm—the door opens and the Porter of the Basilica enters with a torch in his hand.]

PORTER. Father, a woman asks to see you.

THEODAT. There is a place for women to see me,

the confessional: a time, the third hour. [*And to himself he says with trembling and with joy:*] If it were she!

PORTER. Father, it is an old woman. [*And with a trembling and with joy the Bishop says within himself:*] It is not she!

THEODAT. How old is she, do you think? [*And with sadness and with remorse he says within himself:*] Yet grief may have aged her. I am forty and my hair turns grey.

PORTER. Father, she is three score and ten, as I judged by the light of my torch.

PAULINUS. In that case—!

[*The clerks and even Martial and even the old Porter break into covert smiles which vanish before the Bishop's stern gaze.*]

THEODAT. The young follow the old.— Return and ask her what she needs, whether it be alms or food or raiment. Let her receive what is due to one of Christ's poor little ones; or rather return and tell me and I will carry it to her myself.

PORTER. [*Going.*] I will ask her, father.

THEODAT. Give alms with your own hands. The poor are the perpetual messengers of Christ, your Father. Kneel down, my sons.

[*The clerks kneel down and the sacred words fall upon their bowed heads—the sacred words which the arms of the pontiff, tracing multiple crosses in the air, seem to sow, to sow like a powerful sower upon each conscience.*]

THEODAT. The blessings of Almighty God, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost be upon you that you may be blessed, my very dear sons. Amen.

THE CLERKS. Amen.

THEODAT. Now go and may the peace of the Lord be upon you.

THE CLERKS. And with you, father.

[When the last clerk has passed the door the Porter re-enters, with his torch still in his hand.]

PORTER. She asks for no alms, father. She is a great sinner—she trembles—she supplicates—she says that the Bishop alone . . . What sacrilege, father! She speaks of the burden crushing her old shoulders . . .

THEODAT. You are trembling yourself! Let her come in! The sins of my flock are my sins. Let her come in. Go you and ask her. *[The Porter goes out and returns in a moment with the old woman who has sinned. During these moments THEODAT murmurs to himself:]* O Lord, I thank you that it was not she. The temptation would have been beyond my strength. You have spared me.

[Humble, bent over her stick, an old woman comes in. Her rain-cloak, like a round cope, enwraps her in heavy folds of grey stuff. The hood, like a monk's, entirely hides her face. She throws herself on her knees and kisses, first one, then the other, the Bishop's feet.]

THEODAT. Arise, woman, and speak.

[The stick remains on the tiles; the rags fall, and before Theodat—who recoils—rises Maximienne, in the whiteness of her linen robe, a Roman statue, pagan beauty in the house of God.]

MAXIMIENNE. It is I.

[The Bishop's cheeks are pale; there is anguish in his look; he goes step by step to the back of the hall. Maximienne slowly follows him, then stops, and they remain silent, a few seconds, facing each other.]

THEODAT. Devil, are you come to tempt me?

MAXIMIENNE. I hoped so.

THEODAT. Do not think that I will fall to your wiles.

MAXIMIENNE. Wiles! Oh! After all, I am your wife!

THEODAT. You are no longer my wife.

MAXIMIENNE. And it is you, the Bishop, who say that! "Whom God has joined together let no man put asunder."

THEODAT. Whom God has joined, God has unjoined.

MAXIMIENNE. I am your wife.

THEODAT. [*With violent irony, the expression of a love rending itself.*] My sister, I love you, my sister.

MAXIMIENNE. [*In a voice where anger is mingled with supplication.*] Be silent; ah, be silent!

THEODAT. [*Suddenly calm.*] "To the Bishop his wife shall be as his sister." The Councils have spoken; I know you no longer.

MAXIMIENNE. [*Ironic, with the air of a woman making a scene in her own home.*] Yes, you know me, since you are afraid of me.

THEODAT. I fear God; I fear the Church and her commandments. "If the Bishop be not married, let him not look upon womankind; and if he be married, let him put away his wife."

MAXIMIENNE. Those are horrible commandments.

THEODAT. Blasphemy!

MAXIMIENNE. And you speak of blasphemy, you who have scorned the sacrament which united us for ever . . . [*She makes a horizontal gesture*] here . . . [*She lifts her arm above her head*] and above.

THEODAT. [*Simply and with the consciousness of piling up useless arguments.*] You know the decree of Pope Gregory!

MAXIMIENNE. No. But if it concerns Bishops, I, the Bishop's wife, am interested in it.

THEODAT. Do not jest—it is a terrible thing. For having kept his wife in his house, for having seen her—you understand?—for having seen her just once, “the Bishop shall be deposed.” Will you condemn me to that ignominy?

MAXIMIENNE. How much more tranquil we should be! Ignominy? Christ endured far more poignant ironies. Bend your head as he did, proud Pontiff! Ah, you have more pride, humble Bishop, than heart, good shepherd!

[Anger glitters in the Bishop's eyes; but he contains himself.]

MAXIMIENNE. Give me one good reason, only one. Tell me that you do not love me, that you never will love me, that you never loved me.

THEODAT. I hate you!

MAXIMIENNE. *[Smiling, with a certain satisfaction.]* That is not the same thing.

[THEODAT is frightened by the violence of his words and suddenly finds himself glad to see that MAXIMIENNE has not been hurt by what he has said.]

THEODAT. *[Half to himself:]* I know, I know that to hate is not the same thing as not to love. Yet if I filled my heart with hatred, love would come out of it like the bubbles which burst on the surface of a narrow vase filled quickly with water. Alas! alas!

[While he murmurs with his eyes turned to the ground, MAXIMIENNE has taken out the brooch which held her white mantle on her shoulder—a mantle of the same whiteness as her tunic: she throws it on the back of the bench and appears with her arms bare but covered with bracelets, her neck slightly uncovered and enclosed in a collar, from which hang two little silver balls shaped like bells. Laughing,

holding out her hands, she approaches THEODAT, who starts, escapes her touch and moves over to the small bench. She rejoins him.]

MAXIMIENNE. [*Supplicatingly.*] Theodat! Dear Theodat! How I love you!

THEODAT. . [*Overcome.*] How beautiful she is. [*But his emotion warns him of the danger.*] She is as beautiful as hell. I hate her. She is too beautiful. [*He cries aloud.*] Go! Go! You shall enter a convent.

MAXIMIENNE. [*With assurance, but not insistent.*] Oh, no, I will stay here—in my home. [*She folds her cloak into a cushion, places it by the fire and sits down.*] I am quite comfortable here.

[THEODAT walks in agitation up and down the hall and after several turns stops in the middle with folded arms.]

THEODAT. But you consented to live in a convent. There one is at peace; there life is calm and so sweet: a little labour with the hands; books; plenty of that parchment that is so rare and precious; simple food, but certain and eaten in happiness. “Go therefore and eat thy bread in peace and drink thy wine with gladness.”

I thought you were at Tours!

MAXIMIENNE. At Tours! I have never left Clermont. I hid myself, I lived on alms like an old woman, I was dressed in rags, I shut my bride's clothes in a chest and I held out my hand. You yourself have given me bread and wine at the gate of the Basilica, not every day, but almost every week, when I suffered too much and when I had to choose between seeing you and dying.

Contented! Yes, I tried. I was brave, but my strength has gone . . . [*She rises and goes towards THEODAT.*] Ah! don't repulse me.

[THEODAT starts away. He is deeply touched, however, and mutters, closing his eyes.]

THEODAT. Poor Maximienne!

MAXIMIENNE. Why make me suffer when I have the right to be happy—when it is my duty! My place is here. Have I come to tempt you? But I deliver you from temptation—I am your wife. You have changed, Theodat; you have greatly changed . . . I am still the same, still your Maximienne. Listen, when you were only a priest, you loved me in secret.

THEODAT. [*Half to himself.*] Yes, I wanted to seem more virtuous than I really was . . .

MAXIMIENNE. You used to come to me in the evening, or it was I . . . You remember? Well, to-day, as then, I should be content in secret.

THEODAT. To-day it is impossible. What was sin then would be a crime now. Every eye is fixed on me. No, no . . . [*He laughs nervously.*] Ha! ha! ha! The Bishop and his wife—what an opportunity for the impious, for the dissimulating pagans who spy on us! Ha! ha! ha! The Bishop and his wife! Ha! ha! ha! The Bishop taken in the act of a deadly sin—deadly, deadly, deadly!

MAXIMIENNE. My griefs are deadly.

THEODAT. Do you want us to have children that are accursed, incapable of inheriting, slaves born in my church!

MAXIMIENNE. [*As if speaking to herself.*] Children, children . . . Yes, God might yet bless us, after ten years . . . A child, a son . . . Why should he be accursed . . . Your decrees! Who observes them? Is Martial, your dear Martial, an accursed child?

THEODAT. Do not calumniate the memory of Prudentius. Martial was the son of his choice, not the son of his flesh.

MAXIMIENNE. Everybody does not say that. But let us forget the holy Bishop and not speak of him. I am miserable because I have had no child with you; you would love me more, if I had; you would not seek, like a theologian, for excuses to put away your wife. Ah! be silent! You anger me!

THEODAT. Respect your Bishop.

MAXIMIENNE. I do not know the Bishop—I know only my husband, you, you, you.

THEODAT. Ah! Gate of Hell! You are she that touches the forbidden fruit in play. You are the daughter of the first law-breaker, she whom Tertulian said was more powerful for evil than the Demon, she who brushes the image of God from a man's heart!

MAXIMIENNE. Do not forget that you have taught me the Scriptures and the Fathers; cite me this passage: "Woman, thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee."

THEODAT. It is true—there is such a passage—you have a good memory—but . . .

MAXIMIENNE. You see! My desire is to my husband and I submit my will to you.

THEODAT. But it is also written: "Wine and women destroy the wise man's wisdom."

MAXIMIENNE. It is also written: "Woe unto him that is alone, for when he falls there is none to help him."

THEODAT. "One man among a thousand have I found; but a woman amongst all those have I not found."

MAXIMIENNE. "The beauty of a woman gladdens her husband's countenance."

THEODAT. "And I found that woman was bitterer than death."

MAXIMIENNE. [*Going towards him with a smile of*

tenderness and desire.] I am not bitter. I am sweet. Remember . . . Kiss me again.

THEODAT. [*Starting back.*] Impious! Are you not ashamed? Would you tear me from God? Leave me, leave me to draw ceaselessly nearer to Him. Remember Bodegesillus, Bishop of Nantes. His wife pursued him like a sin until at the moment when she attempted to drag the sacred vestments from him there appeared an accusatory witness of the divine protection—a lamb of glittering white appeared on his breast. Beware of a like prodigy.

MAXIMIENNE. What an argument! The real prodigy is that you no longer love me.

THEODAT. For me also God may perform miracles. Simplicius was vowed to chastity and God permitted this marvel—that burning coals which he carried in his mantle no more burned the cloth than if it had been stone.

MAXIMIENNE. [*She bursts out laughing and stirs the fire, which breaks into a livelier flame.*] Will you try? Come, let this be the judgment of God.

THEODAT. [*He feels that his mind has wandered into absurd arguments whose weakness he is immediately sensible of, for if the Lord performs miracles it is not permitted to man to tempt the Almighty to use his power. He breaks out angrily.*] Hence, evil woman! Go to Tours, go to Radegonde from me, to Radegonde who has escaped the caresses of the king her husband. Go!

MAXIMIENNE. You, Bishop, will never escape me, for here the personages are reversed: the Clothaire here is a woman, stronger than many kings.

THEODAT. Hence, Eve! Hence, Satan! I will call my clerks, the levites of my sacred guard.

MAXIMIENNE. Let them come, your clerks, and I will say to them: "My husband has called you to

witness that he had put me away and now calls me back." Let them come, let them come, your episcopal guard.

THEODAT. I have more powerful arms; I have shields more impenetrable than human breasts! I will take refuge beneath the shelter of my sacred vestments. O God, once more, bless once more my sacred vesture.

[With outstretched arms and lifted head he recites like a prayer the symbolic enumeration, without noticing MAXIMIENNE's ironic interruptions.]

THEODAT. I will put on the Amice, broidered with the cross of my salvation;

The Alb, which embraces my body with purity and whiteness;

The Almuce, which protects my consecrated head;

The Stole, symbol of the yoke which holds me.

MAXIMIENNE. *[Who has been listening in astonishment, approaching him.]* Both of us beneath the yoke of the Stole.

THEODAT. The Fanon, a fetter on my arms and neck to remind me of the fragility of earthly bonds.

MAXIMIENNE. Our kisses will make them more solid than a bar of iron.

THEODAT. The Chasuble, which covers me like a small house, entire and closed on all sides, the unity and integrity of my faith.

MAXIMIENNE. I will force the lock.

THEODAT. The Cope, which defends my shoulders against profane burdens.

MAXIMIENNE. I am light as a woman.

THEODAT. The Dalmatica without a join like the robe of my Saviour, image of the cross on which He was nailed for man's sake.

MAXIMIENNE. I will bear half of your cross.

THEODAT. The Gloves through which my left hand knows not what my right hand doeth.

MAXIMIENNE. Give me your right hand—I will be discreet.

THEODAT. The priestly shoes, which lead my feet upon the right way.

MAXIMIENNE. I will follow the traces of your feet.

THEODAT. The Girdle with which I have bound my loins and my desires.

MAXIMIENNE. I will break the clasp.

THEODAT. [*His arms fall to his sides like cut boughs.*] O Lord, you have heard!— Shameless one!

MAXIMIENNE. [*Sadly, with a touch of anger.*] You did not think me shameless when you crept towards my house at the fall of evening and when you forgot everything in my arms so that one day the morning sun surprised us together! You did not think me shameless when you provoked my kisses with your caresses. You loved me.

[*MAXIMIENNE is silent; slowly, with an air of discouragement, she walks towards the organ. As she preludes with a few notes, the Bishop becomes restless and speaks in a voice of impotent and weary anger.*]

THEODAT. The holy organ! The sacred instrument of liturgies, the accompaniment of prayer! Maximienne!

[*But she begins to sing. He listens. She sings and accompanies herself on the organ, which after each stanza, repeats the melody without the words:*]

Ubi sunt amatoria,
Ubi sunt adjutoria
Qui prima desideria
Revocarent ad amatum?

Quid lumen luet ridendo?
Quis flatus flabit virendo,
Quae flamma surget fovendo
In deserto derelictam?

THEODAT. [*While MAXIMIENNE continues, without the words, her improvised melody.*] She seems to weep as she sings!

MAXIMIENNE. [*The organ ceases; she comes down and stands by the Bishop.*] Once! Must I say that again, O God? Once, you loved me! At least remember our old joy. May its memory be as sweet to you as it is sweet to me. You possessed me and I possessed you as a treasure. Theodat, I had only you, I have only you!

THEODAT. [*With an effort, trying to hide his emotion.*] Me! Me! You have God.

MAXIMIENNE. I have Him no longer.

THEODAT. He is everyone's.

MAXIMIENNE. He has left my heart. I had Him only through you. In you alone was He visible and sensible to me. In you, adored intermediary, I found Him, felt Him, loved Him! . . . No, I can live no longer. . . . You are my husband—I love you—you belong to me!

[*She puts her hand timidly and yet with resolution on THEODAT's arm—her hand contracts at the touch of his flesh through the sleeve.*]

THEODAT. [*In a softening voice.*] Take pity on us! Think of our salvation, of hell; think of hell!

MAXIMIENNE. Hell is to live without you, Heaven to sleep quietly in your arms. [*Theodat remains mute and immobile; she starts away.*] Barbarian! Barbarian, less feeling than the stones of your basilica! [*She picks up the clothes that made her disguise as an old woman; she flings them on her*

back.] I am going . . . Good-bye . . . This time you will never see me again.

[She goes very slowly.]

THEODAT. *[Making a half step towards his wife.] Maximienne!*

MAXIMIENNE. *[Not stopping her very slow movement.] All is over. Good-bye.*

THEODAT. *[Leaning forward.] Maximienne!*

MAXIMIENNE. *[Still moving.] Ah, cruel, cruel!*

[She bursts into sobs.]

THEODAT. *[Going forward resolutely.] Maximienne!*

MAXIMIENNE. Good-bye. Good-bye.

[She touches the door, where her hand gropes for a moment. The lock yields and MAXIMIENNE is disappearing like a phantom little by little through the opening. THEODAT rushes forward and catches her robes.]

THEODAT. Remain. I love you.

[MAXIMIENNE allows him to bring her back; she shuts the door and very softly pushes the bar over, then yields to his arms. THEODAT takes her over to the bench and sitting down places her on his knees, caressing her more with kisses than with words.

He touches her, he contemplates her, he is happy. Her woman's dress troubles him almost as much as the woman herself. Here are her gold-embroidered shoes, held to her ankles by silk bands, her green girdle fastened by a buckle on which are two Roman soldiers, leaning against little byzantine columns, watching the tomb of Christ.]

MAXIMIENNE. You gave it to me. This ring—you gave me that, too—you remember? I was only your promised bride then. As long as I have it on my finger you will love me. How can I doubt its power after such a proof!

THEODAT. [*Bending down and picking up a key hidden under the bench.*] Look, this is the key of the little door. I give it into your hands.

MAXIMIENNE. [*Clutching the key eagerly.*] I have you again! Ah, I am happy now. If you only knew my life, my sadness, my tears, since you abandoned me!

THEODAT. I, too, have suffered. I thought of you always, always, even in my prayers.

MAXIMIENNE. The dream which brought me here did not deceive me.

THEODAT. A dream? From God perhaps? Yes, I hope so; I think so.

[*He caresses the white tunic with its embroideries of red silk and gold, the scarlet breast-fold. He loosens the collar whose clasp is formed of two united crosses; he half opens the little silver spheres. In one is a fragment of the mantle of St. Etienne; in the other, a parchment on which a skilled hand has written the Gospel according to St. John, which preserves us from sudden death and all unforeseen misfortunes. The spheres shut, THEODAT respectfully touches them with his lips.*

He takes off the bracelets, constellated with dark stones; he touches the gold circlet which holds her hair.]

THEODAT. How beautiful you are! I am well beaten.

[*He carries her towards the bed, smiling and victorious—a new Eve!*]

THE END.

THE OLD KING*

A Play in One Act, translated from the French of
Remy de Gourmont by Richard Aldington.

The People of the Play.

GILDAS: King of Andaine.

GUISLAINE: Daughter of the King of Andaine.

YOLAND: Prince of Locmaria.

GERMAINE: Maid of honour, illegitimate sister of
Guislaine.

FLORAINE: Lady in waiting, sister of Guislaine,
daughter of the King and a woman
slave.

GAUTIER: Page.

Pages, soldiers, servants.

*The action takes place in the castle of ANDAINE, in
the great hall hung with arras, between nightfall
and sunrise, in the year when a bird of fire ap-
peared in the sky.*

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reserved by the translator on behalf of the heirs of the late Remy de
Gourmont.

THE OLD KING

BY REMY DE GOURMONT.

(Authorized translation by Richard Aldington.)

FLORAINE. [*She finishes setting out the lighted clay lamps, flowers on trees of bronze, then, opening the shutter of the ogive-shaped window, she looks long into the night while the evening wind stirs the wings of her head-dress, like that of an angel. She clasps her hands and exclaims happily, counting on her fingers—for one by one the stars are coming out.*] One eye, two eyes, three eyes: one alone is the eye of God; two are the blue eyes of Jesus smiling at His mother, our Lady; three are the Wise Men on their knees in the straw and in the glory of the stable.— One eye, two eyes, three eyes: the melancholy flames of the lamps tremble like souls when the angelus, crying at dawn, recalls them to the prison of purgatory.— Oh! that I might be delivered, I also, poor soul of love, for one whole autumn night, or, if God willed, for one spring day, when the willows are so soft, blue and green, so tender with their flowering tears—delivered a little from my love, Yoland, lord, you, who hold me always in a harsh prison of love within your dark gentle heart. O Yoland, your heart is black as a prison-tower and I eat there bread which is harder than the rings with which you bind my legs, Yoland, and my white arms. Yoland, the poor servant's arms are white and warm as the fleece of a lamb, as the young lambs tottering

on their legs. [*She lifts her arms with a gesture of love; her wide sleeves, falling back, leave them naked.*] Yoland, here are my arms! [*But she blushes, perceiving her nakedness, hides her arms, one falling along her robe, the other resting on the half-opened shutter.*] I am drunk with the scent of the stars! O sky, garden of thyme and hawthorn, garden of roses and columbines, here is the choir, amorous of woes, here prince Iris who smiles in his helmet with its violet crest. Here is the carnation, a golden-haired page; here is Yoland, a sun flowering in the sun of my dream.

[*She is silent and stands immobile, yet seems to be very far away. At this moment GAUTIER comes in and, perceiving FLORAINE, approaches, kneels down, and is about to kiss her hand. With an apparently unconscious movement, FLORAINE's hand slips away.*]

GAUTIER. You escape like a serpent under the briars, like the water of a stream. Your hand passed over my hand like water through fingers. Give me your hand, Floraine; I am thirsty; let me drink it.

FLORAINE. [*She turns, hiding her hands in her deep sleeves.*] No, I cannot play any more. I have thought about it—it is too serious for play.

GAUTIER. But I am serious too, Floraine, when I look at you. Do I seem to be laughing? Look at my eyes! Floraine, I will play very seriously with you.

FLORAINE. What would you do?

GAUTIER. You will see, you will see; I will give you kisses on your hands, your arms, your cheeks, your mouth!

FLORAINE. On my mouth, Gautier! But that is a sin!

GAUTIER. Your hand, first of all.

FLORAINE. No. Your eyes frighten me. Yes,

your eyes are serious; they are too serious. Poor little Gautier! My hands are chained, my arms are bound, my cheeks are in prison, my lips are sealed. May God deliver me, little Gautier!

[She kisses his forehead, holding his head in her hands, and then disappears.]

GAUTIER. Why do my eyes frighten her? My eyes are blue, my soul is blue as the kiss of sky and sea; my eyes are gentle, my heart is gentle as the smile of the first leaves of an oak. My hair is a foliage of desires and dreams where the wind of life plays with love. Strip off my leaves, wind, and bear me towards the track of the white-winged ships on the flowering sea! O blossoming sea, wild garden of waves! You are afraid of a desire, Floraine, you are afraid of a bird: I am afraid of myself, Floraine, for instead of a gentle child I find a man who says: "I love and I desire." Your lips had the grace and power of two suns and of a double spring: the tree has all its branches and its shade is fertile. Come, sleep in my shadow.

[He stands up with his arms stretched out and he can be seen to grow larger and to become a man. At this moment, the window opens, a puff of wind bends the clear flames of the lamps, thunder bursts overhead and a flash of lightning flies through the night. GILDAS enters slowly but with a look of suspicion and mistrust.]

GILDAS. The cannon, bells, torches . . .

GAUTIER. Lightning and thunder, my lord! The elements have revolted under the paternal eye of their master. In the time that it takes to open and shut one's eyes three times Nature has done the work of a long and laborious year: then God spoke.

GILDAS. What do you mean?

GAUTIER. Look, my lord, how in a moment I have

become from a page, the child I was yesterday, a captain to serve you better.

GILDAS. It is true. The sap rises without our seeing it; it rises like an odour and the leaves have budded when we think the life still buried under the grass. It is true; you can look into my eyes without lifting your head. Your glance is proud. To-night you shall command the company of pages.

GAUTIER. [*He bends on one knee.*] I render you homage and swear fidelity to you, King Gildas.

GILDAS. You will defend this part of the castle, the women, and, most of all, my daughter, the princess Guislaine.

GAUTIER. And then Germaine and then Floraine—yes! But why to-night?

GILDAS. Be silent and follow me until the bell rings. You know nothing, then? Have women's mouths secrets now for the ears they kiss? Have the she-cats become mute, do they make love silently? Gautier, tell me the truth!

GAUTIER. [*He trembles before old Gildas' imperious voice.*] My lord, I love Floraine, but she has kissed me only once—on the forehead.

GILDAS. Ah! On the forehead! Like a sister, little brother! But you should take her, force her to cry out, make her speak! At the moment when her soul is darkened by sensual mists, she will speak, without knowing what she does, the words and the names which her blood drifts along her veins. She will speak your name perhaps—or perhaps the name of Yoland.

GAUTIER. [*He pales and repeats in a sad voice:*] Yoland!

GILDAS. Do I pierce your breast? Draw your sword and defend yourself! Defend her whom you love against herself and against Yoland.

GAUTIER. Yoland?

GILDAS. Everyone here loves Yoland. Yoland is popular—under gowns and petticoats. From Andaine to Locmaria, Yoland has passed through all the branches, and, like a fox, over all the virgin hedges. She who has not yet had Yoland will have him. Ring, bell; burn, torches; he shall not have Guislaine while I live!

GAUTIER. Nor Floraine!

GILDAS. Well said, brave boy! But understand. I am old. Guislaine has taken a great deal of my authority. The soldiers are devoted to her and I no longer dare to give orders, for fear of seeing myself snubbed by a respectful disobedience. My authority is now only in my glances, in my words, in my gestures: wherever I am not present, I no longer reign. So I wander by night and by day; I bear the fear of my presence into the very cellars, and I listen. There is silence when my heavy step echoes under the vaulted roof, but women's voices are shrill; they trickle, like water, through the walls. When I pass in the silence of the night, the walls say: "Yoland, Yoland! Yoland."—I have refused him my daughter's hand; I know that he will come to seize her, I know that treason will open the gates to him, and I know that he will come to-night. Gautier, old books have taught me many things and the stars are my friends. Natalis will ring the bell. He is in his tower; he watches, he exorcises and he prays. Prayer is stronger than law, but law governs the inferior world; whoever knows it escapes its tyranny; by prayer and by exorcism he directs actions according to their true end, which is the glory of God and the salvation of men. Yoland is a heretic, Yoland has revolted, Yoland is luxurious: war for love, war for aggrandisement, religious war!

He tears off the scapular which blesses the breasts of women and the medals which purify their hearts; the fear solely of the people, not the fear of God, makes him respect churches, priests, calvaries, and the saints. O Lord of Heaven and You, Virgin, His earthly mother, deliver me from evil! Child, take this dagger, it will identify you to the castle guard; I shall be everywhere, at the doors, at the walls, at the mines. Come and choose a sword.

[GILDAS and GAUTIER go out.]

GUISLAINE. [*She enters by another door, followed by Floraine, and advances silently, like a conspirator, looking, listening, then speaking, at first in half-tones.*] They are going down the great stair-case. To choose a sword! Why should that boy be slain? But, Floraine, since this young Gautier is wooing you, he ought to obey you. How is it if he loves you that he follows Gildas? You are betraying me.

FLORAINE. I, madame? To betray you would be to betray myself. I love Count Yoland like yourself and as much as you: conqueror and master, he will choose between the princess and the serving-woman—but if he wants me for his slave, I will be his slave.

GUISLAINE. And his mistress.

FLORAINE. May God hear you!

GUISLAINE. Insolent and scandalous creature! I will have you hanged when Yoland is King!

FLORAINE. I shall tell my name, sister, so that I shall have my head cut off instead.

GUISLAINE. You have no name.

[*Enter GERMAINE.*]

FLORAINE. Guislaine, Germaine and Floraine, the three sisters, are marked by the same sign: the same joys, the same sorrows, the same loves.

GUISLAINE. Chance!

FLORAINE. [*She turns back her sleeve and GUISLAINE'S to the shoulder.*] Show your arm, Germaine. Sisters, you see the three sister stars, the three red stains, the three flowers of blood.

GERMAINE. [*She strikes herself and her sisters in the breast, as children do in their games.*] To Guislaine: Daughter of a Queen. To Floraine: Daughter of Pain. To Herself: Daughter of Hate.

FLORAINE. [*Playing the same game.*] To Herself: To love. To Guislaine: To reign. To Germaine: And you?

GERMAINE. I am neither daughter of a slave, nor daughter of a queen, but born of violence and adultery; my destiny is less clear: it seems to me that I do not love life. I have never held a man's hand in my hand without desiring to break it or to bite it, for man is strength, his hand is action.

GUISLAINE. They play, they chatter, they act like little girls! You know that it is for to-night?

GERMAINE. At what time?

GUISLAINE. Towards morning. At the time when he is asleep, when he falls, dropping his stick and his lantern, tired at last with having dragged his ghost along all the stairs and into all the cellars. To-night or the next night, but be ready: the orders have been given. You will remain here or in the gallery. In case of need—the underground passage in the chapel under the Altar of Saint Anne.

GERMAINE. What shall we do with the old King?

GUISLAINE. Let him remain a ghost!

GERMAINE. Yes, but he has gestures, glances, words; people obey him. His kingly look penetrates hearts like an imperious perfume. Let us make sure of him, respectfully.

GUISLAINE. No. He wanted war; let him endure the lot of the conquered.

GERMAINE. Do not be so harsh towards your father.

GUISLAINE. He will not understand. Childhood, fallen like an over-narrow garment, has covered his head. We will say nothing to him. Without knowing it, he will pass from the state of a king to that of a shade. He will have the cellars to walk in, and the darkness for a kingdom: we will leave him his lantern and his large, blind-man's stick.

GERMAINE. But let us tell him what we want.

GUISLAINE. The king is only a word, but a sword is lifted against us, young, proud, and luxuriant as a young shoot of the year: ash, hazel or willow, it must be broken.

FLORAINE. Who?

GUISLAINE. You know.

FLORAINE. Gautier?

GUISLAINE. And you alone can break this impertinent rod.

FLORAINE. How?

GUISLAINE. How! He's in love with you, fool! The man who loves a woman belongs to that woman as a mouse belongs to a witch. You can strangle him, you can poison him—you can make him sleep. You have hands, you have lips—Floraine; when the trumpets sound under the ramparts, Gautier must be sleeping either in the shroud of death or in the shroud of love. You can be gentle; you can intoxicate him so deliciously that he will bless the poisonous lips and their savour will be to him an insatiable desire. He is an eldest son. Take him and inherit with him the barony of Audierne.

FLORAINE. You do not know me, Guislaine. Thine is a simple, foolish heart. I love Yoland; I will

offer myself to him and, if he takes me, I shall be his happy slave. If he spurns me from his knees, I shall never love anyone but myself, made sacred through having loved the impossible. Gautier is a pretty boy; I like him; but I am bound, I am prisoner; Yoland holds me with his strong knees, I feel the bite of the spurs and the bite of the snaffle at my mouth: I go where he guides me.

GUISLAINE. Poor thing! Yet you know what the tragedy is to be and what part we have written down for you.

FLORAINE. The actors sometimes forget to speak certain verses and if their memory fails them they sometimes fill up the text with unexpected words.

GERMAINE. But what is this Gautier to do, whom I saw yesterday playing with the little peasants?

GUISLAINE. He is to command the guard which will defend this part of the palace. I overheard the instructions which the King gave him. Folly! But he is brave and may be dangerous. Yoland is not invulnerable.

GERMAINE. I will look after him.

GUISLAINE. You?

GERMAINE. Do I not look like a woman? My heart is like a man's—and I hate my brothers—but my breast is flesh and not crystal: the god of my monst'rance is hidden.

GUISLAINE. I have confidence in you.

GERMAINE. Believe in me, for I love you.

GUISLAINE. Sister, you have something terrible and adorable in you. Yours is the only voice which commands my limbs and which makes my arteries tremble like streams ruffled by the wind. Shall I find you both here in a little while?

GERMAINE. Here, or in the gallery.

GUISLAINE. I am going to give the soldiers drink.

GERMAINE. You yourself?

GUISLAINE. Myself. My pitcher pours wine; my hand pours fire.

[GUISLAINE goes out.]

GERMAINE. Do not yield, Floraine. Be the ironic bird which mounts from bough to bough as the child approaches the tree. And—listen to my confession. I am ashamed and I suffer in the depth of my man's heart. I feel a coward before the cowardice of treason and my honour is revolted when I think of the old man rent by our plots.

FLORAINE. You, Hatred?

GERMAINE. I do not hate the innocent or the simple or the weak. Am I Hatred, Floraine? I hate only the males who desire to humiliate me in my flesh or in the flesh that I love. I love Guislaine! I love Guislaine, my divine sister, a queen elect by every drop of my blood—listen! and I am jealous of Yoland. My hatred is named "Yoland." I do not wish him to take my sister. I am Guislaine's faithful server, and I do not wish her to have a master.

FLORAINE. You speak of her like a lover!

GERMAINE. And I would like to have the right to speak of her so, Floraine!

FLORAINE. Would you be a man?

GERMAINE. I would like to dare to be a man . . . No, Yoland shall not enter here.

FLORAINE. And I?

GERMAINE. Go and find him again.

FLORAINE. No, I will wait. He will come, he must come. The bird waits. The bird will not escape the fowler. Ah! Germaine, I wait, I wait deliciously.

GERMAINE. But think! If he takes the kingdom, he takes Guislaine.

FLORAINE. He does not love Guislaine, he loves Floraine. He does not love Guislaine, he loves the kingdom. He does not love Guislaine, he only takes her to get the kingdom. He takes the kingdom only to give it to Floraine. Ah! How happy I shall be! How I shall run in the meadow of love! How I shall play with the lambs, with the flowers, and with each blade of grass! They knock at the gate of my prison. Enter, fair prince! Enter, sun! Here are my arms, my lips! Here is my heart filled with dew! Enter, fair prince! Enter, sun!

GERMAINE. Why don't you sing the whole song, Floraine?

FLORAINE. Enter, fair prince! Enter, sun! Here is my heart filled with dew!

GERMAINE. No! Here are my eyes filled with tears!

FLORAINE. No! Here is my heart filled with dew!

GERMAINE. No! Here are my hands filled with blood!

FLORAINE. Leave the blood in my veins and the tears in my eyes. I want to keep all my strength to love Yoland and all my tears to laugh like a child with Yoland, with the eyes of Yoland, with the arms of Yoland, with his heart, with his limbs, when I offer him my crossed hands like a stirrup . . . Think, Germaine! I am the war horse and the love horse. He leaps the hedge, if the gate is shut, and he comes to sniff his master's hands—he trembles and a shiver runs from his loins along his legs to the very horn of his hoofs! Yoland is my master and my cavalier. I would be damned for Yoland's sake!

GERMAINE. How well you speak your love! I cannot speak. I think of mute caresses, profound and dark, and I am afraid of my desire.

FLORAINE. You desire to be happy, you desire to live at the feet of Guislaine, and I want you to be happy. Let everything go, let this night end, and when Yoland, before setting foot here, kisses the hands I hold out to him, when Guislaine moans in terror and kisses our knees, you will come and embrace the fallen queen in your maternal arms.

GERMAINE. You tell me your dream, Floraine, but Yoland—do you know him well?

FLORAINE. I love him.

GERMAINE. A bad answer. A woman's heart is a child's heart. . . . Will you be my friend?

FLORAINE. Yes.

GERMAINE. And do you want us all three to be saved and to be queens?

FLORAINE. I do want that.

GERMAINE. Take half the kingdom, take all the west of the Forest to the edge of the sea, and let that be the dowry you bring Yoland. But let him respect the castle of Andaine and let neither his men nor himself ride across the river Yves. Let him add that domain to the domain of Locmaria and let old Gildas die in peace in the care of his two daughters. If you have not lied, if Yoland loves you and has loved you since he saw your legs three years ago at the ford of Grollon when we passed through the water, laughing like two careless girls; if it is you whom he chases from flight to flight under the trees and in the glades of Andaine; if it is for you that he burns huts and ruins towers, go, give him what he wants and let us be happy, each in our own pleasure.

FLORAINE. No, no, he shall be King of Andaine, he shall be the conqueror, the master, the destroyer. He must see Guislaine and Floraine captives before him and choose Floraine, and my sister's pride must

be punished and I will mount on her shoulders and kneel on her loins. But nothing more. I will protect her and you shall not be separated from her. You shall be treated as the daughters of the King.

GERMAINE. No, Guislaine is the only queen. I want to be the queen's sister and not the bed-fellow of a fallen princess. I want what is now. Long live the King! By betraying Guislaine, I betray treachery and I make the happiness of my love and the glory of my heart. Yoland shall not enter here. Everything shall be stopped. I am going to find the old King and from that Gautier whom you despise, Floraine, I will forge a sword which will crush out your eyes.

[GERMAINE goes out.]

FLORAINE. I believe in God and in Yoland; I believe in my love. I am the servant and the mistress of the King. I wait for the meadows to be rosy, for the gentians to shed tears of gold; I wait for Saint Michel to descend the miraculous stairway of heaven and for St. George to pass, reaping the ripe corn. I await the sword which will sever the thread of the Virgin and the lance on which my hair will float like a trophy. I await the conquerer, the lover.

GAUTIER. [*He enters quickly, looking proud and happy.*] Floraine, be glad. We shall remain master of the town and of the whole kingdom. The army is rejoicing over an approaching victory and I shall be Lord High Constable.

[*He kneels before Floraine, whose thoughts are far away.*]

Deign to accept my love, Floraine, deign to become a woman through him who without you would be still a child. Floraine, give me your eyes for an alms, your beautiful, soft eyes, Floraine. . . . I am giving you everything I have, my youth, my

strength, my frankness and the glory whose kiss I feel already on my heart. I give you my death, Floraine, for I will die for you, if God desires that I should die.

FLORAINE. [*She looks at him, caresses his head, a little touched.*] Be good, child. Yoland is cruel to offenders. Be good, for I want to save you.

GAUTIER. [*Standing up.*] It is I who protect you! Floraine, you speak to a knight, not to a page. . . .

FLORAINE. Let me go, let me go! I have only just enough time to go and put on my best robe to receive the victor.

[FLORAINE goes out.]

GAUTIER. Everyone thinks of Yoland here. Everyone loves him: Floraine loves Yoland. She? She who has made me a man loves a rebellious prince whose sword has the ugliness of a boar-spear. Floraine, mother of my heart, who brought forth my desire, am I then the son of treason and shame? Long live the King! My first love is my first disgust.

GERMAINE. [*She comes in during his last words.*] Gautier, where is our lord, Gildas?

GAUTIER. Gildas? He is everywhere, in the cellars, in the arsenal, on the ramparts, in the Tower. He will die with honour. I shall not abandon him. I shall be near him and the young sap of the wild seedling will gush out under the axe at the same time as the blood of the old oak.

GERMAINE. You talk like a woman! Come. Give me your sword. Have you the password? There is a trap-door under the altar of St. Anne; you can escape.

GAUTIER. [*Sadly and indignantly.*] Oh!

GERMAINE. He is not a coward! . . . He has blood, red blood under that soft, fine skin.

[She caresses his cheek.]

This hand is hard as a gauntlet.

[She takes his hand.]

This arm is supple and strong, like a sword.

[She holds his arm in her two hands.]

There is a heart in this breast, an invincible heart.

[She touches Gautier's body with her fingers.]

Gautier, Gildas has chosen you as lieutenant; he has done well. We have confidence in you, for you only can stand against Yoland, iron against iron.

[Touching the handle of his sword.]

Oh! Here is a sword which asks only to lose its virginity.

[GAUTIER blushes.]

You blush, prince?

GAUTIER. Madame, I am not a prince, and could I become one if I must fight against Gildas and against felony? Gildas said rightly: "Everyone here loves Yoland." I am in despair. There is nothing but death for me.

GERMAINE. Again? To die when a King's daughter. . . .

GAUTIER. Floraine is not a King's daughter.

GERMAINE. How do you know?

GAUTIER. I do not care.

GERMAINE. You give her to Yoland, without fighting, without regret, without shame?

GAUTIER. I will fight but not for Floraine, for I blush to love her since my love was too weak to tear her from treason. I shall fight for the King; I shall fight for myself—for you, madame.

GERMAINE. He is gallant as a page and pretty as a girl. Come! Be brave and hands of joy will pour more caresses for you than your heart can

drink. Child, who despairs when he has only to smile to be loved! Come, look at me! What beautiful eyes he has.

[*Her cape opens and shows a small part of her breast. GAUTIER is moved, for GERMAINE is beautiful.*]

Let me see what colour they are; they are blue, like grass in the meadows. . . . Wait. . . .

[*She takes his head and kisses his eyes, then makes him sit near her on a coffer covered with thick fleeces.*]

. . . I cannot tell. . . . Never have I breathed in so lovely a flower. . . .

[*She draws him to her breast and plays with his hair. GAUTIER kisses her throat.*]

Will you fight for me?

GAUTIER. Yes.

GERMAINE. For me only? For me and the King?

GAUTIER. Yes.

GERMAINE. You will kill Yoland?

GAUTIER. Yes.

GERMAINE. He frightens me. . . . Shall I be the wife of this child?

GAUTIER. [*He puts his arms clumsily about her.*]
I am a man.

GERMAINE. Yes, in your eyes and on your lips is poison. . . .

GAUTIER. I do not understand what you are saying; I want to close your mouth.

GERMAINE. No, no!

GAUTIER. With my mouth. . . .

GERMAINE. [*Who has shrunk back.*] No, no! You love me like the fly which seeks a crevice in which to plant the poison of life. . . .

GAUTIER. Yes, I love you; I want to live in you.

GERMAINE. Do you love me enough to obey me, as if I were the lover and you the mistress?

GAUTIER. Yes.

GERMAINE. You say "yes," because you desire me. Your heart beats not with love but with desire. Mine also, Gautier, and my mouth like yours is hungry and thirsty for flowering flesh. Do you know how I can love?

GAUTIER. I know nothing. . . . I would like to kiss your knees.

GERMAINE. O Guislaine, my sister, his hair is long and gold like yours. O Guislaine I love you in him. . . .

GUISLAINE. [*She enters slowly and noiselessly, her head high and ironic.*] You see, Germaine, there was a hole in your breastplate.

GERMAINE. Oh! . . .

[*To GAUTIER.*]

Go.

[*GAUTIER runs off without a word.*]

GERMAINE. Pardon, pardon! It is you alone! I was surprised, but that youthful head—I thought of your beauty, Guislaine, as I caressed it.

GUISLAINE. What? What have you admitted? The desire of my body, you, a woman, you, my sister? You think of the grace of my limbs while you play with a page? What! You want to see me naked? Here are my arms, here are my shoulders, here are my breasts. They are of a marble which cannot be moved by a woman's eyes, nor by her hands, nor by her lips. You are looking?

[*She draws her cloak closer.*]

Folly! So you love me for that, for my skin, for the shape of my breasts? You love me in a fleshly way? Ah! Well, if the hour were less tragic I

would let you have your way, I would allow myself to be caressed by your impotence. . . .

GERMAINE. Ah yes!

GUISLAINE. As one allows a boy to make love to one to pass away an hour, to laugh at the difference between the desire and the act. . . .

GERMAINE. If you knew!

GUISLAINE. The pretensions of vain voluptuousness weary me. Two little girls lying in the moss and playing like perverse angels or foolish turtle-doves. Ah, you are dangerous within for man nor woman! Go and skip and let your glances glide under your companions' petticoats. My sister? My adulterous sister, if I wish to recognize her. . . . Are there no officers here to tear the evil herb of debauch from my ladies of honour? Go to the guard, to the postern; they are bored. But you have Gautier? Have you chosen a girl among so many males? Ha! He ran away like a girl. . . .

GERMAINE. He fled from you. He will not flee from Yoland.

GUISLAINE. Leave me. I need neither your love nor your aid. Go.

GERMAINE. I obey you because I love you.

[*She goes out.*]

GUISLAINE. This is what they are! This is their devotion! The dog follows the trail of its vice. One would stain her sister's robe: the other, impudent daughter of a slave, dares to dream of the hand elected for my pleasure. Am I not the Queen, am I not the mistress? Am I not she whose bold will made fertile the plot whose future will soon be born, like a lovely child? Incorruptible flesh: shining head; smile, whose perfume saddens the roses themselves; O my love, O my lover, O my life! I am the world on the eve of creation; I am a chaos full of beauty;

I hold the sun in my night and the stars in my abysses; streams of peace and of joy flow through the formless shadow of my mountains, and the mud of my marshes glitters with the pure glory of future flowers. I am the sea, filled with the prodigious sigh of storms and waves; I am the cloud which will weep with joy; I am the sown space of fields at the hour when spring casts in the world the divine veil of puberty. Yoland, marvellous labourer, here is your work, here your harvest, your reward, here is Guislaine. . . . He will come. . . . I wait for the signal which will break this window. . . . Yet an hour, perhaps less than an hour, and everything will be accomplished forever! . . .

[*She muses.*] . . .

Everything has yielded to my passion—men, the interests of my people, my father and myself—and my honour! I had to lie, to betray, I must deliver to misfortune the old King who smiled so gently as he caressed my hair. . . . O my father! O my people! I am afraid, at the last moment I am ashamed. . . . Was that thunder?

[*A movement of fear.*]

No, it was my conscience grumbling.

[*A movement of impatience.*]

Be silent, fool, and remember your love. Well said. I will think of my love. Love is everything. It is God, it is the world, it is the universal blossoming, the trees, bellied out like sails, and the grasses moving like the tides. It is the beasts, the flowers, women. I am a woman. I am the woman. What matters to me your wars, your cities, your countries, your laws, your kings and all the chains with which you deck your slavish shoulders! I am a woman. I care for nothing but the joy of being beautiful, happy and fertile. Everything must bend under the feet

of my joy—it shall walk triumphantly over every vanity and every tyranny. Give way peoples, kings, sergeants, nuns, beggars and priests, give way! A woman passes! Kneel down. She goes towards her lover, a radiant heifer lowing at the odour of the male. Depart! The sight of a free, proud animal would trouble the humility of your eyes. Stand aside! Let me walk in the glory of my resolution. I am life. I am she who blooms on ruins and who transforms the dark soil of dead leaves into live leaves. I am urged on by God. I go. I am everything, since I am. I want to enjoy the infinity of pleasure. I want to flower. I want the flower of my stem to be as large as the world. One man alone is equal to all men; my happiness is a right; the name of the only crime is sacrifice. . . .

[Her exaltation ceases.]

What demon speaks in me? Speak yet, demon! Speak! Sustain me! Your words make a fan before my eyes. . . . Ah! I see corpses, I see convulsed hands, I see blood on the old King's white beard. . . . Yoland, Yoland, why have you not given the signal? Yoland, I am dying of anguish! . . . Oh! my love vigil will be my death night. . . .

[She listens, with her ear towards the door.]

It is he, I can hear his staff, he is coming down the stairway of the Tower.

[She opens the door, which remains wide open, and the old King is seen.]

There is his lantern; it is really he. How old and weak he looks! He trembles like a tree in a storm and his staff slips on the stone steps. He stops. . . . He lays down his staff. . . . He is sitting down, with his lantern near his feet. . . . How pale he is! He is asleep. . . . No, he speaks. . . . He is dreaming.

GILDAS. I am the King, I am everything, the whole country, the forest, the stream, the town, the Tower, men, women and children. I am everything and I am nothing: an old word, an old King, a dying torch. They will not understand that words are coffers full of gems, of medals, of necklaces. . . . They will see when the coffers are broken what treasures men had hidden there under the syllables carved by the centuries. . . . They will see when the city shatters under their fists and the country under their heels. . . . They will see when the edge of an axe or the point of a sword has killed the old King. . . . They will see everything that was in his heart, all smiles, all desires, all pleasures, all the tears of a people. There will come out blood and water, wine and milk. They will see what a miracle an old King's heart is. Old King, old word, old coffer worm-eaten and rusty! Old King! Why will they not let me die with the honour of an old King? No one cares for me now here. Everyone betrays me. Everyone here loves Yoland. Yoland is young. Ah! Young King, you will eat one day the poisoned herb of treason. How old I am! It is true that I am very old. I can scarcely think. I always think the same things. . . . O ancient Kingdom, your dreams, your songs, your saints, your heroes, the flowers of your apple trees and the eyes of your daughters, you give that all to the new-comer, to the stranger, the enemy, to Yoland! Oh, you are old too, ancient Kingdom! Everything crumbles to dust, old words, old Kings! Where is my staff? My lantern? How old I am! Old King, old word, old coffer worm-eaten and rusty. . . . Lord God, why must I die by treason? Why, O Lord, have you given me a daughter with a heart of iron? Oh, how long and difficult are the steps that go down to my

tomb! The tomb of the old King, of the old King, of the old King. . . .

GUISLAINE. I am afraid, I am afraid! How he dreams!

GILDAS. [*Drawing himself up.*] My daughter, I am not dreaming, unhappily.

[*He rises and continues to descend.*]

GUISLAINE. Father, listen! There is something within my breast which I want to tell you. . . . Oh, I beg you!

GILDAS. [*He stops, lifts the lantern as high as his head, looks at his daughter a minute and replies*]:

We have nothing to say to each other, my daughter! The present does not understand the past.

[*He goes away; his staff rings on the flag-stones.*]

GUISLAINE. [*Passing the door.*] My father!

[*At the same moment the bell rings, an arrow breaks one of the panes of the window.*]

GUISLAINE. The signal! It is too late. I belong to Yoland.

[*She looks out through the broken pane.*]

There they are! There they are! Rise, sun! Clouds, tear yourselves apart. The curtain opens! I see! He marches the first, sword in hand, and beside him a red banner unfolds its flaming tongue. The gates! The gates! Wide open, the gates! Brave soldiers, how they obey my desire! Yoland has entered. The whole army follows him. I can count them. . . . One, two, ten, twenty, a hundred. . . . Enter, enter, servants of my heart. Enter, royal ants, the city is yours. . . . Ah! A flight of arrows! Cries, blasphemies! Who dares forbid my love the stairway of the Tower? . . . God! I can no longer see Yoland! . . .

[*Pages, women, soldiers, FLORAINÉ and GERMAINE enter.*]

FIRST PAGE. Where is Gautier? What's to be done?

SECOND PAGE. Gautier! Gautier!

GUISLAINE. Silence! Away, valets!

THIRD PAGE. Madame, we are here to guard your honour.

GUISLAINE. My honour! . . .

[*To the soldiers.*]

Throw this impudent person through the window!

FLORAINÉ. Yoland! Yoland!

FIRST SOLDIER. [*To GUISLAINE.*] Madame, you should retire. Swords are blind.

GUISLAINE. Obey!

FIRST SOLDIER. We obey only the King.

FLORAINÉ. Yoland! Yoland!

[GAUTIER enters, sword in hand.]

GAUTIER. Here, pages, to the right. . . .
Soldiers, to the left. . . . Make a hedge, a hedge of iron!

A SOLDIER. [*Entering.*] The King is dead!

ALL. Long live the King!

[*Other soldiers advance, bearing the body of old GILDAS. His forehead is split open; blood trickles on to his white beard.*]

GUISLAINE. [*Kneeling.*] Old King! Old father!

[FLORAINÉ and GERMAINE also kneel down apart.]

GAUTIER. [*Drawing GUISLAINE aside.*] Depart from here. Take care, you will stain your robe!

GUISLAINE. [*Approaching.*] I must see him! I must see him!

GERMAINE. [*To a soldier.*] Who killed him?

THE SOLDIER. No one. He fell on the stairway when the bell rang.

FLORAINE. Yoland! Yoland!

YOLAND. [*He enters slowly, looks around, and says, lifting his sword.*] Here is your King!

ALL. Long live the King!

GAUTIER. [*Pointing to the old King.*] Silence, people! . . . Dead or alive, there is no other King than Gildas.

YOLAND. Who are you?

GAUTIER. He who picks up the dead man's sword.
[*YOLAND shrugs his shoulders and attacks the PAGE disdainfully. GAUTIER disarms YOLAND and pierces him.*]

GAUTIER. Gildas, I have kept my promise!

ALL. Long live the King!

FLORAINE. [*Throwing herself towards YOLAND.*] Yoland! Yoland!

YOLAND. [*Dying.*] Then you loved me, Floraine?

GUISLAINE. It is I that loved you, Yoland! I. I. Ah, I have paid dearly for your love, Yoland, and you die without thinking of Guislaine! Oh! Awake, Yoland, look at me, speak to me! Oh! do not die! . . . Yoland! Oh, at least let me gain something by my crime! Yoland! . . . Ah! day of horror! I must die also!

[*She seizes YOLAND's sword and slays herself.*]

GERMAINE. [*Throwing herself on her fallen sister.*] My sister! My sister! Oh, how beautiful you are, my sister! Oh, oh, oh! my sister is dead! My heart is dead!

[*She weeps.*]

FLORAINE. [*She rises and, sobbing, pointing to GERMAINE, says to GAUTIER:*] Love her, my lord. I will be her slave. If I had hearkened to her this

would not have happened. . . . Oh! all these pale faces, all this blood, all these tears! . . . Love her, my lord.

GAUTIER. [*To GERMAINE.*] Rise, madame, and come near to me!

GERMAINE. [*Obeying.*] My lord, will you save me from the horror of my heart?

GAUTIER. If you love me, madame, you will be saved.

FLORAINE. [*To the people, pointing to GAUTIER.*] Here is your King!

GAUTIER. [*To the people, pointing to GERMAINE.*] Here is your Queen!

FLORAINE. Long live the King!

ALL. Long live the King!

[*The crowd slowly leaves the hall.*]

FLORAINE. O Yoland, I am now your prisoner forever, prisoner without hope, prisoner with bleeding hands and with pierced heart! My God! I will live so as to be very unhappy, to suffer greatly, to weep greatly, to be a slave whose only joy is the pity she inspires.

GAUTIER. You are our sister, Floraine.

GERMAINE. Love is your excuse, Floraine.

GAUTIER. Today there has been a great tragedy, in the kingdom and in my heart.

May, 1897.

THE ITALIAN STAGE TODAY.



IVACIOUS, gesticulating groups of dark-eyed lads, black in a flood of bright, Italian sunshine, gathered before the huge old college building: how often, in my student days at Florence, I have passed among them on my way to some murky little restaurant after the morning classes; and how often—half a foreigner, although one of them—I have smiled to myself at the unvarying topics of the conversations that came to me in lively snatches as I went.

“How delicious she is! I’d give anything——”

“Salvini! Salvini! Did you ever see him act, you? I tell you that Novelli——”

“She’s got a mouth as red as fire. *Dio mio!* It makes me——”

“Nothing of the sort! *Semiramde* goes like this: la—la——”

“Hey, Nello! Last night I went to *Come Le Foglie*—gallery, of course—and——”

“He acts like—No, you are a madman not to see that it’s his art to——”

Lovely woman, the opera, the theater; always these. And think of it—boys from fifteen to twenty! It was no affectation, either; those terrible eyes and lips are a fierce obsession even at that early age, and play and opera are to these lads what baseball is to lads here.

Think of it as an indication of what the drama must be and mean in Italy. The penchants of these

college boys are not a matter of acquired taste; they are in the blood. How should it be otherwise where the warm, languorous nights make every garden Juliet's; where for centuries the most picturesque church on earth has fostered the dramatic sense of a people whose every utterance is spontaneously dramatic? Italy's passion-hot drama is the great national pastime. In its many forms it follows all the racial and social complexities of the national life. Besides the large companies which incessantly traverse the country, others reside in various districts, whose native dialects they speak on the stage; and still others, heirs to the broad wit of the Improvised Comedy (that bizarre creation of the masses, in which the prototypes of Harlequin and Pierrot filled with extemporized comic dialogue the fantastic outlines given them), continue to draw roars of laughter from the good-natured, humble audiences among whom they dwell; while in the still mediæval south, Mysteries even now preserve the link between church and stage, and so well that Judas is often obliged to fly for his life before the performance is over. No smallest town is without a theater; and men and women, young and old, noblemen and laborers think of it with almost equal zest as the ideal place of amusement. Indeed it is obviously so, to them, because it is practically without competitors. The Italian does not like physical exertion, and though violent in anger and prone to admire such violence, finds barbarous a game like football; though he lives almost as much in his intellect as in his passions, he is not studious like the German—books are rather scarce than otherwise in the Italian house; his attitude towards art, too, is more a subconscious basking in esthetic sunshine to which he was born (and which he pines for the moment he is deprived of it)

than an inclination to make art a pursuit; business is work, strictly, and commonplace work. The delights of struggle for achievement are no delights to him: he sees the pain and the profit separately, and the one greatly detracts from the other. He loves what comes to him ready and unalloyed; and, consciously quick with subtle gifts and sensibilities, loves the readiness with which he makes much come to him. In his drama, musical and otherwise, all comes at once to his mobile, gifted mind, to his delicately sensitive emotions, and to those hungry passions of his that are yet so strangely glamorous with intellectual and emotional radiances and colors in which he sees them arrayed. Here no kill-joy preparation is required, no dullnesses intervene, no responsibilities irritate; here life, condensed to its most dramatic aspects, unfolds itself before him as a thrilling spectacle—a thing of burning passion, and yet a beautiful thing of the mind.

Passion, beauty, mind: these are surely the chief characteristics of the modern Italian stage—especially passion, and in its most violent and tragic forms. What must strike the American first and most is the lava-flood of incontinence that overwhelms these plays. Even to the untraveled observer the thing must be only too palpable; of the forty typical plays described in Jean Dornis' *Le Théâtre Italien Contemporain*, thirty are based on illicit love.

Adultery is the subject of nineteen. *Cavalleria Rusticana* is but one of the four like it by the same author, nor is Verga in any way exceptional. In Bracco's* *The Masqueraders*, a husband returns

* As may be expected, playwrights are legion in Italy; the following are the best known of those now living: Robert Bracco, perhaps the most popular, is a kindly and keen observer of the bourgeoisie; among his most successful plays are *Don Pier Caruso*, *The Mas-*

home from a long voyage to find that his wife has committed suicide. Soon he discovers the cause; not even shame at her guilt but grief at being abandoned by her lover, his own business partner. "You have betrayed my honor," he says to the seducer, "but the crowd shall never suspect it and trample on my name; beware how you relax an instant in your hypocrite's part. On with your mask, forward with the comedy; you are mine to shield myself with as I see fit; you have forged your own chains."

In Rovetta's *The Dishonest*, it is the death of the lover that reveals all to the husband, who, appointed administrator by the heirs, discovers that the luxuries which he fondly imagined to be the fruit of his wife's skillful economy were the price of her betrayal. Dreading that others will read the truth in any sudden retrenchment, he has recourse to theft; he is detected, and cursing the cause of his downfall, yet weakly embracing her at the last, he takes to flight, while she rolls to the floor in abject agony. In Praga's *An Ideal Wife*, we see the husband basking in the affectionate solicitude of his wife

queraders, The Unfaithful One. Camillo Antona Traversi and his brother Giannino have portrayed with fine irony the high society to which they belong; the former's *The Rosenos* and the latter's *The Bracelet* probably hold the first place with the public. Giovanni Verga is the author of violently dramatic Sicilian plays, such as *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *The Fox Hunt*. Marco Praga is an objective writer like Flaubert; *The Ideal Wife*, *Hallelujah*, and *The Virgins* may be mentioned among his most successful works. Girolamo Rovetta is a skillful dramatic impressionist, whose vivid settings, it is contended, create his psychologically imperfect characters and make up for his disconnected plots. *Dorina*, *The Dishonest*, and *Reality* are three of his best plays. Enrico Butti, whose chief plays are discussed in these pages, is the dramatic analogue of Fogazzaro (who also has written a few plays). Gabriele D'Annunzio's *Gioconda*, *Citta Morta*, etc., are highly esteemed, though it is recognized that they are more the work of a novelist than that of a playwright. Sem Benelli sprang suddenly from obscure frame-maker to noted artist with his *Supper of Pranks*; his subsequent plays have not been equally successful. Ugo Ojetti, author of *All for Love*, is one of the lesser but distinguished artists.

and his old friend. With a gay farewell he leaves the room, and the wife flings herself passionately into her lover's arms. Without, all point and snicker behind the victim's back, but he never suspects. Even when he finds his serene-faced spouse in the other's apartment, her candor disarms him; she is there on the same errand as himself—to warn the family friend of danger that threatens his brother. The lovers prudently part, at last, under his very nose; but he remains blissfully unconscious of any change. As the enterprising familiar coolly remarks to a friend, "the dame is an ideal wife—and an ideal mistress." In the same author's *Hallelujah*, the sinful daughter of a sinful mother utterly crushes her old father's pride, already bowed with hidden shame; in his *Undine* the husband's dread of betrayal—he has married an actress—turns him into a hysterical tyrant who finally drives his wife back to the stage.

To the American this must seem more sordid than tragical. Not so to the Italian; to him it means the ever brooding tragedy with which the burning south menaces the peculiar and tormenting sense of dignity of the southerner. In Italy the betrayed husband's cry of anguish is not one of shocked morality nor of broken-hearted affection; it bursts from his intolerable humiliation at having been defied and outwitted; at having been robbed to his face; at having been made a helpless object of ridicule to his fellows. When he slays the culprit, he is almost invariably acquitted, for he has washed his stained honor clean. In Italy the unfaithful wife is almost as great an incubus as the negro in the South here, and anyone familiar with conditions there must easily see why. D'Annunzio's women, half devil and half child, may be cruelly drawn; yet an irresponsible child the Italian woman certainly is, in a meas-

ure; and this because she is given little chance to be anything else. Camillo Antona Traversi's *The Happiest Days* shows us her betrothal: arranged for her, squabbled over, artificial: more her parent's affair than hers. From the start, too, she is made to feel that she is too weak to guard her own integrity; how often I have watched elder sister or puffing mother trailing along in the wake of some betrothed couple. Finally marriage puts an end to the trepidations of her parents, and thenceforth the husband watchfully guards in her *his* uneasy honor. Small wonder that she comes to believe in her irresponsibility; small wonder that, cast thus into the arms of her ardent temperament, she comes to see in herself the preordained victim of the flaming, beautiful god, Passion, and willingly abandons herself to him when she is beset. And beset she is, without scruple, for it is not her childish honor that is considered, but that of her husband; if he is a dolt unable to protect it, laughter is all he deserves. Is it strange that he dreads the disgrace of that taunting laughter; that he feels the menace of it envelop him with almost superhuman power; that in his struggle against it he assumes, in his own eyes, the tragic dignity of a Laocoon?

Yes, terribly tragic, to an Italian audience, is the struggle between the overwhelmed mortal and the irresistible god. Terribly tragical, yet intensely seductive, even to the men, with the intoxication of sacrifice upon his altars; for their blood also loves in him all the romance of love aflame with all the splendid fury of youth; and if woman is often likened to a serpent by them, she is always the divinely beautiful serpent that her victim must embrace even while she slays him. As for their attitude towards plays in which their own many lapses

from virtue are portrayed, add to this glamour the familiarity of habit and you will understand what it must be. The American would hardly regard these "dramas of passion" in the same light. The heroine of Rovetta's *Dora* is wooed by the young marquis in whose mother's house she is a governess. Thereupon she is dismissed and falls into the hands of a beldame who urges upon her a vile means of paying her rent. When the enamoured youth seeks her out, the girl flings herself into his arms in a transport of joy. But alas, he has not come as a rescuer; convinced that he cannot marry her, unwilling to seduce her, yet unable to conquer his passion, he sides with her evil councillor. She drives him from her: then despair added to necessity compasses her ruin. The marquis now seeks her out once more. "Marry me if you want me," she scornfully replies, and, utterly infatuated, he marries her. C'est la grande passion; there's no resisting it. So finds Luke, the hero of Bracco's *Triumph*. A man of theories and books, his idyl with the young artist, Nora, is purely Platonic. "My lips have never deflowered hers," he declares. This amuses his friend, John, but horrifies a good old country priest of their acquaintance, who considers such love without consummation unnatural and unholy, and, in hopes of bringing the two nearer to good old mother earth, invites them and their friend to his rural parish. The miracle is accomplished but not quite as he expected, for it is the friend who profits by it, and without benefit of clergy. Not that the ascetic scholar remains untransformed: abandoned by the happy doves to vegetate as best he may, he earns an indignant rebuff from a rustic damsel who, she would have him know, is about to be married. Add to John's amusement, the priest's uncomprehending

disapproval, and you will understand why the play based on sweet, soft nonsense is as rare in Italy as it is common over here. *Dora*, too, is instructive in more ways than one. Chiefly it is the story of a man's surrender to passion; but incidentally—nonchalantly, almost—it is a study in prostitution, and as such again typical of many others. Where unrestrained passion is an indispensable concomitant of life, it is not surprising that its attendant evil should be equally familiar and as readily accepted; and the Italian stage is too faithfully representative to ignore the unfortunates who, in every narrower street, after dark, jingle keys at the passer-by or hurry whispering after him. Praga's *A Woman* is based upon a fact familiar to students of this unhappy class: their wretched calling does not banish love from their hearts; each poor Nancy has a hulking, villainous Bill Sikes of her own choice. Praga's Nancy is less ignobly the victim of her devotion than Dickens's. For the sake of her idol's child she struggles away from the slough, and when she finds that only separation can save it from taint, returns alone to the slums from her benefactress' house; then she kills herself.

The passion in *A Woman* is not ignoble, and much other passion that flames to its tragic extinction on the Italian stage is nobler far than glorified lust. The fury of clashing knives in *Cavalleria* is brutal; yet it is the fury of fearless men who, if they scorn the discretion which is virtue, also scorn that which is the better part of valor. The heart-broken invectives of poor old Hallelujah are almost Shakesperian; and there is something akin to religious contrition in the agony of remorseful filial love with which the hero of Butti's *Race After Pleasure* confesses to his dying old mother that he has seduced his ward, and

betrayed his wife, and wrecked his home. Both these plays tell us that if Italy is the land of passions, one of these, at least—that which unites children and parents—is sacredly beautiful in its intensity, even though it may seem weakly submissive in the ones and patriarchally tyrannical in the others. “Why do I hate the gendarmes?” answered a burly sailor to my query; “I hate them because they are lost souls; they swear that they will arrest even their fathers and mothers if necessary!” For such men as these Gallina wrote that touching story of a divided family’s reunion in the name of loving remembrance—his dialect play *The Mother Never Dies*. Even for such as these, too, Rovetta might have written his *Romanticism*, with its finely romantic hero, the patriot conspirator, Count Lamberti, whose arrest by the Austrians is the climax of his devoted struggle for his country and his faithful wife’s for his honor and her own: even for such as these, who responding in thundering thousands to D’Annunzio’s appeal, not many months ago at Rome, proved that among their passions is the noble one of country love.

Passion conceived in flaming images of beauty: this is the hashish-dream which the Italian audience dreams. The play is the suggestion that conjures it up for these tropically colorful minds. There is something Elizabethan in this, and not in this alone. To the American, the Italian stage must often appear as bare as Marlowe’s. The Italian sees actually upon it all that it would convey; and as he looks and listens, it fills with a spectacle in whose beauty the rich abundance of spoken imagery and the melodious grace of perfect lines blend and become visible. For the play, to be successful, must be not only a dramatic but a literary work of art, whose merits as

such will be enthusiastically praised in the newspapers the next day. D'Annunzio's very stage directions are little masterpieces of description, and no one who has seen Benelli's *Supper of Pranks* can forget the limpid charm of its verse. But how leave D'Annunzio with a word? The visions of sylvan fairyland which arise from the pages of his *Spring Morning's Dream* are surpassed only by those which make the great Elizabethan's dream a thing of magic. To him who reads, Botticelli's picture appears again with all its fascination of tender greens and all its charm of gentle graciousness; with the shadows that haunt it pathetically darkened, however; for the nymph, surrounded by her companions, yet beyond reach of all their fond solicitude, wanders among the flowers and shrubs, a poor Ophelia, her mind forever darkened by the black night when she was bathed in her lover's blood and left with his icy body in her arms. Only in the words of her immortal sister is there greater power of evocation or sweeter, sadder music than in hers. And if we hear this music, how should we be deaf to the stirring din of labor that comes resounding from the shipyards of Venice in *The Ship*? There is the birth of a great sailor people in the sound, and the whole of this epic play heaves with the vast breathing of the sea. In the last act, as we stand amid those sturdy builders who crowd the pier, intent upon the wide horizon, how vividly, in their cries, we see it coming, the long, swift ship homing on its broad, outstretched wings, like a hawk.

These pictures and many more besides have appeared to my fancy in the written page, but I have drunk as deep of visible beauty at the theater. The Italian stage is often bare, but often, too, it frames tableaux than which no picture could be more strik-

ingly beautiful. I shall not soon forget the rich fifteenth century coloring, and above all the perfect compositions in *The Supper of Pranks*. Almost at the rising of the curtain the first occurs. The indistinct sumptuousness of the dining-hall proclaims the patrician in the host. It is one of Lorenzo il Magnifico's great followers who graciously advances to meet the entering guest. We hear of two more who are expected; of a feud between them and the other, to be ended at the Magnifico's behest. Yet a few words, and we are watching the guest. He laughs and jokes right merrily as he tells how those two tied him in a bag and before all Florence ducked him in the Arno, then dragged him out, and then, while the crowd jeered, jabbed him in the buttocks with a knife. He has a hungry, seared-looking mouth, this gaunt young man; and his long fingers keep moving, as he laughs, like the twitching legs of a hurt spider. The old soldier before him, too, is watching him, but he has not understood; his words prove it: "And you—can laugh? But—but what are you then!" "What am I?"—the lean, sensitive face twists into sudden whipcords of pain—"I am a coward. My knees shake and my teeth chatter when I meet them. They bullied and beat me when we were boys together; they taunted and cowed me afterwards; when they found I loved a woman tenderly, they took her from me, and when I tried to be brave (oh, just for once, you know!) they were upon me in a moment and—well, that little joke, by the Arno. And I laughed—I tell you I laughed, I tell you! Yes, there by the Arno, as they did it to me. You'll never guess why. Imagine how nice: I have got another sweetheart. Oh she is so lovely, so lovely—Do you know her name? Revenge is her name; and she says: "If you want me; if you want me all,

all—then laugh! Laugh again! Laugh yet again! Laugh once more! Laugh! Laugh! La— Ah! Ha! Ha! Ha!” He has flung himself backwards into a great chair, his legs stuck out stiff, his clutching hands turned to claws, his face branded across by the frightful laughter of his mouth. And at his elbow stands the princely host, in courteous distress—helpless; and behind them the hospitably laden board, untouched. As I gazed, I forgot where I was, that evening; but somewhere behind me the straining silence cracked in a sudden rattle that rose and crashed thundering in one stupendous roar.

The curtain has risen more than once when the second picture forms itself on the stage. We have seen the two swash-bucklers—brothers, they are—arrive, and with coarse taunts and insults greet their victim. We have watched him, a cowering figure at one end of the table, still joke and laugh—still joke and laugh, until one of his jests betrays the younger bully into revealing his love for the elder’s mistress; still joke and laugh till the elder (in an ugly mood, now, for his brother, who is evidently dear to him, has flung out of the palace in anger) furiously accepts the playful wager that he dare not appear in armor to terrify a certain fashionable resort that night; still joke and laugh while the armor is provided: then, as the savage, half-drunken daredevil rushes clanging out, change from laughter to a white flame of deadly earnestness, and hiss into his servant’s ear: “Go warn them that he is raving mad. But go! But run!” This and much more we have seen, and with a growing sense of what is coming, inevitable as fate; a few exultant words have told us that the haggard youth hunts not for himself alone, tonight: the two reckless scoffers have aroused one whose displeasure means sure death, in Florence.

Now the curtain is up once more. Dark, and damp, and gloomy, a dungeon vault: a group of sinister attendants; a woman who tearfully pleads with them; and in the midst, roped to his chair, a gigantic man, his face bloated and distorted with fury, his muscles bulging against the cords. By will of the Magnifico, a doctor has been busy with him, exorcising the evil spirit. A tall lean youth enters and stands before him, hands on hips, ineffable derision and hatred in the smile that shrivels his lips from his teeth. The woman (not the stolen mistress, but another, betrayed yet enamored) renews her pleading: "He is harmless, now. Let him go! I will take charge of him! Let him go!" The smile on the youth's face deepens with a strange ambiguity, as of hidden thoughts; his eyes are keen and bold with power. "Loose him," he orders shortly; the attendants step forward at his command. As the ropes are unknotted the prisoner's great chest heaves in a savage relief; his huge body swells, becomes visibly bigger; forgetful that a dozen watchful eyes are upon him, he leans eagerly forward, fixing a terrible look upon his captor. The youth still stands erect before him. He is more than erect; he is rigid. So is his face; and his eyes—Slowly he shrinks back, shrinks up against the wall, shrinks twitching and crooked with fear into himself. Then it comes, horrid and quaking from between his teeth: "Oh God, they are untying him!" Can you see him there? If a more terribly effective picture of fear has been painted, I have yet to behold it.

The play moves swiftly on to the last tableau. The youth has freed his enemy only that he may plunge to his destruction: "I shall spend this night with the woman who is no longer yours, poor lunatic," he has told him; and he knows that, those

words spoken, he has only to watch the trap which he has set. The raging bully promptly abandons his deliverer and rushes off to his mistress, in whose sitting-room a stormy scene occurs. He has come to wait for the upstart, and presently follows the woman into her chamber, knife in hand. Then comes the last picture; the most striking I have ever seen on any stage. The moonlight streams peacefully into the deserted sitting room; through the open window comes the sound of guitars and of a sweet voice singing. Suddenly the door opens, and a scarlet spectre—a silent figure wrapped in a bright red cloak—makes rapidly for the still, dark curtain behind which waits the knife. The scream of agony which bursts from the chamber a moment later is more relief than climax, for that apparition crossing the moonlit room was like tragedy itself made visible. When presently the murderer parts the curtain and strides in, it is to stagger back in amazement; before him he sees his supposed victim, triumphant beyond fear. "Go," says the coward slowly, "Go and look better at the rival you have slain."

Quick as his fancy is the Italian's reason. A plot which proceeds by suggestions, leaving what to less ready minds would be unsatisfactory gaps, is characteristic of several of the Italian playwrights. The psychological steps by which the hero of *Dora* descends from suitor to seducer are left to be inferred from his lack of plebeian sturdiness; the moral crumbling of the husband in *The Dishonest* is a contradiction to such as have not heard the cracked pot in his preceding disquisitions on honesty; the arrest with which *Romanticism* ends leaves us to remember what we have read about the Spielberg, and on the other hand to decide for ourselves whether the would-be seducer has gained anything by his

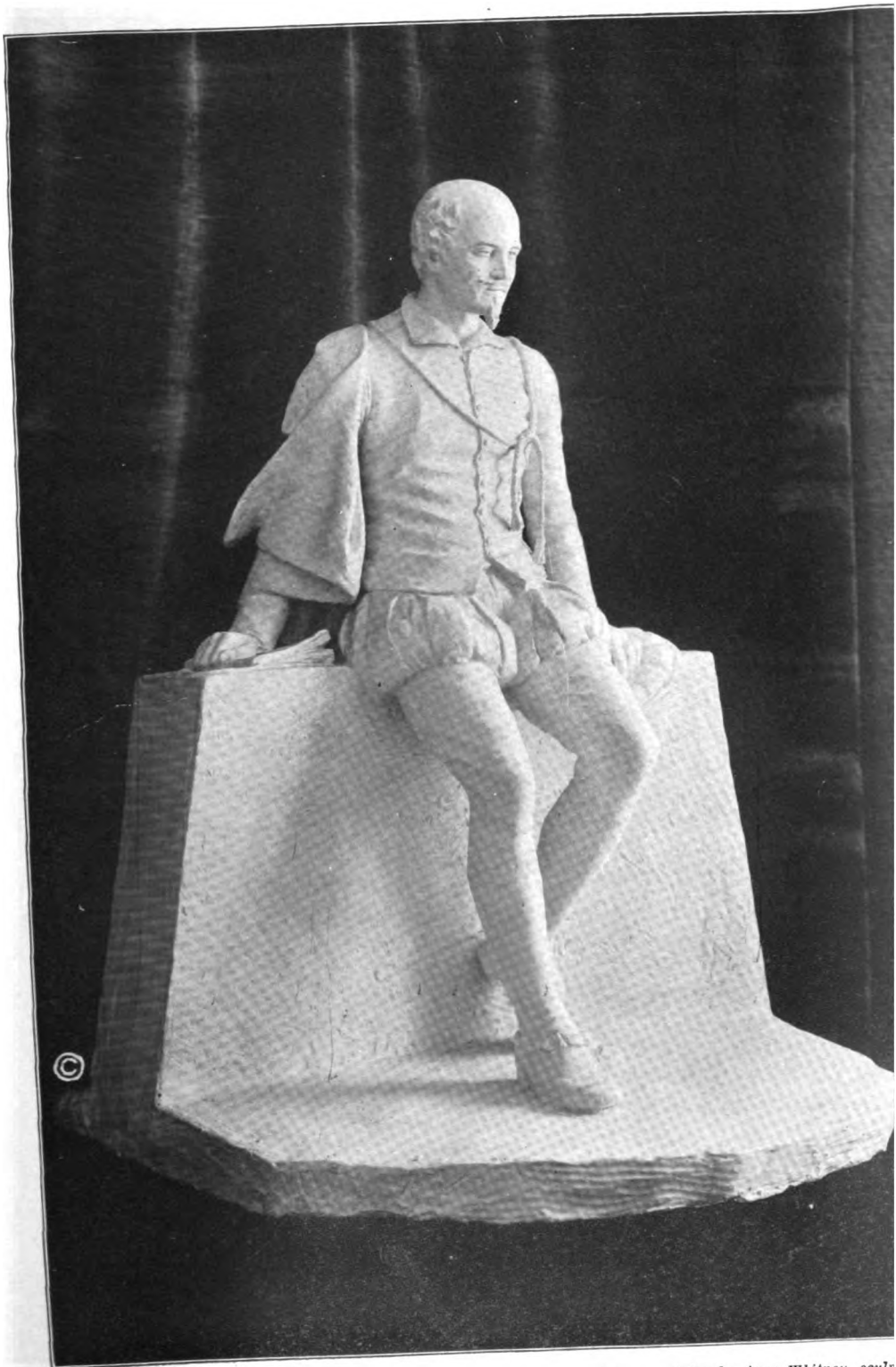
infamy. The problem-play, too, though not elderly-pedagogic like Ibsen's, is frequent. *Hallelujah* contends that the sinfulness of the parent shall be visited in sinfulness on the child; *An Ideal Wife* constructs for us a wife who shall be faithful and unfaithful at once; the Boccaccian philosophy of *The Triumph* is too apparent to require comment. But most notable of all are the plays of Enrico Butti, himself a scientist and philosopher. *The Utopia* proves *ad absurdum* that scientific doctrine moves too swiftly in theory not to be as a devastating bullet when aimed full at slow-going humanity. Dr. Serchi, like many of his profession in Italy, is a positivist philosopher as well as a physician. True to his contempt for marriage forms, he has taken to himself a "companion"; and enthusiastic in his advocacy of Lyncurgan methods against the deformed, he delivers a lecture on the subject in the little town where he is sanitary officer. The result is dismissal and ostracism, for the lecture has revolted even his easy-going compatriots. Leaving his companion to wait for him, he sets off in search of more enlightened hearers. He returns discouraged to find that a deformed child has been born to him, and that the broken-hearted mother, whom love had made his disciple, now demands in the name of a still deeper love that the little unfortunate be not only cherished but given a name. *The Race After Pleasure*, *Lucifer*, and *The Tempest* form a veritable treatise against atheism. They further resemble Fogazzaro's novels in the method they adopt; no avenging Jehovah actually appears, but the atheist is hurled down by supreme misfortune and left to ask himself of what comfort his disbelief now is. In the first it is mere youthful flippancy that comes sobbing to its knees beside the death-bed of a beloved mother; in

the second it is the deliberate conclusions of old "Lucifer," the skeptical professor, that—shaken at last by the agonized prayer of a widowed son for strength and belief—leave the old man staring out of the window and muttering, "Who knows? Who knows?" In the third it is the coarse, pseudo-reasoning of a syndicalist that, after the usual verbosity and blasphemy, results in delivering the peasantry of an old-fashioned but upright uncle into the hands of a dissolute and spendthrift nephew. "Jean Dornis" sees in these plays the deeply religious spirit of the Italians—which seems to me like inferring the patient's love of physic from the physician's prescriptions. It is precisely to a skeptical majority that the plays are addressed, and it is the philosopher in the skeptic who improvises spirited debates on them around the café table after the performance. Indeed, the Italian's marked philosophical tendencies explain much in his attitude towards the stage: to a certain extent, his indulgent unconcern before the "shocking" spectacle; largely, his appreciation of the witty irony which almost completely supplants less intellectual mirth, and his enjoyment of the otherwise unrelieved sadness of his drama.

Such is the Italian stage today; or rather that of the regular companies, which, however, are far more representative and far more widely represented than the others. It must seem strangely exotic to the English-speaking world, and yet there is something very similar to it in English literature; I mean the work of Byron, who, incidentally, is one of the few English poets read and admired in Italy. Indeed I might put it, roughly, that the Italian play is Byron's metrical tale with more of intellect and much more of hot detail added. Here we find his

romantic passion, his colorfulness, melody, irony, sadness—even his careless technique, for not infrequently the Pindaric flights I have spoken of are undoubtedly the result of impatient carelessness. Here, too, we find—perhaps more than all else, when we come to think of it—the promise with which his work is rich. May it this time survive the hour of noble sacrifice and struggle, and through these be wholly realized in the Italian stage of tomorrow.

CHARLES LEMMI.



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THE STORY OF THE HULL-HOUSE PLAYERS.



O have an organization devoted exclusively to dramatic work was a cherished plan of Miss Addams from the earliest days of Hull-House. Nearly all the social clubs included the production of plays among their activities, and frequently a boy or girl would be noted who seemed to possess exceptional ability as an actor. These young people were later brought together in a group which was called "The Hull-House Dramatic Association," and several plays were given by them, but interest in the movement soon waned, partly, perhaps, because of the difficulty of securing a permanent director, and the project was finally abandoned.

We had no theatre in those days and the rough stage of the gymnasium was used for all dramatic affairs, the clubs for the most part getting up their own scenery, which was of the simplest description. Years after, Hull-House was presented with a beautiful little theatre the equipment of which has been a labor of love for all the clubs doing "dramatics" at the Settlement.

Sporadic theatricals given by different groups continued, however, and many young people were discovered who cared little or nothing for the social features of their clubs, but to whom the plays were a powerful appeal. It seemed then that the time had arrived for the formation of a permanent dramatic group, and with this purpose in mind, in October, 1901, Miss Addams called together twelve young

people, all of whom had achieved distinction either in Hull-House Clubs or in the Dramatic Association which had passed out of existence. At this meeting a company was formed which adopted the same name as its predecessor, "The Hull-House Dramatic Association," and I found myself chosen "director," a position I accepted then with many misgivings, but which after fourteen years of service I have come to regard as a source of happiness and pride.

Later Mr. Joseph Jefferson was Miss Addams' guest at Hull-House and the members of the new association were invited to meet him. His advice and encouragement were a great inspiration to us and the work of our first years was largely based on the plan he outlined, which emphasized, not so much what we should do, as how we should set about doing it. Soon after this we were given the opportunity of listening to Mr. Yeats, the Irish Poet. His talk mystified us greatly, and it was many years before we came to understand his point of view, which now seems very clear.

Our opening production was a melodrama which we chose for several obvious reasons; the company was most familiar with that type of play; my own stage experience had been largely along such lines of work; and the neighborhood from which we expected to draw our audiences still loved the old-fashioned drama with virtue triumphing and vice suitably downed in the last act. So we began rehearsals of *A Mountain Pink* with unbounded confidence and zeal. In ten weeks we gave our first performances. I am sure the acting was bad. I know our "villain," who based his interpretation upon that of the "heavy lead" at the "By Joe" (Bijou), a nearby theatre in Halsted Street, fairly "ate up the scenery" in the great third act, winning loud

hisses from an appreciative gallery. But many people patronized us, the neighborhood was delighted, and at the close of the three night's "run" we had two hundred dollars in our treasury and so vivid a sense of achievement that to do Gilbert's *Engaged*, which we chose for our second play, seemed a minor undertaking.

An incident of the production of this comedy is worth noting. We needed a wedding gown for "Minnie Symperson" in the second act. A resident of Hull-House who had been active in promoting the company, playing a part or painting scenery as occasion required, offered to borrow one from a friend, a fashionable "Mrs. Newly-Wed," living on the North Side. The young lady was startled, but was both obliging and game, and the mimic bride from the nineteenth ward wore the white satin "creation" for the three nights of the play. The real bride and her friends came to see us, and that was the beginning of a large and faithful following from the North Shore, which has never failed us, and to whose friendly interest is due a large measure of success.

This was the end of our first year. The next season began early and we managed to do three plays, chosen mainly as studies in technic, in which our company was sadly deficient. Up to the end of the second year, the personnel of the group had remained about the same, but with the improvement in our methods an automatic process of elimination began. Some who could not keep up with the strenuous pace dropped out, and more studious young people, or those with more leisure, came in. A change in the neighborhood, which began about this time, also left its mark on the company. Our Irish and French neighbors were being crowded out by

Italians, who did not care for performances in English, and we were compelled to look elsewhere for our audiences. This meant plays of a different type, and at the end of the third year we gave for the first time in America, Ben Jonson's *The Sad Shepherd*, with the songs and Morris dances as in the original production by the London Stage Society. This play was our first mile-stone. We were "noticed" by the press, and people from various parts of the city came to see us; but this recognition meant hard work, for our standards must again be raised, and better plays produced in smoother fashion for our new clientele.

The fourth and fifth years were filled with uninterrupted hard work, with one or two especially successful presentations, notably Bernard Shaw's *You Never Can Tell*, and Ibsen's *Pillars of Society*, which moved our gauge a few notches higher, and brought us new friends and patrons. We were earning a good deal of money with our plays, most of which we used in improving the stage of our little theatre. Sometimes we went together to see a good performance. *She Stoops to Conquer* with Mr. William Crane and an excellent company was one, and the meeting with Mr. Crane, who received us on the stage between the acts, is an abiding memory.

In 1906-7 we gave two Shaw plays and three Pinero comedies. The company had ruled after the Ibsen performance that the membership should be limited to fourteen, and that no one should be admitted until he had played at least two parts acceptably and had proved himself to be socially agreeable to the members. This sounded rather selfish at first hearing, but the harmony which prevailed in our company, which was made up of most diverse elements, was a sufficient justification of the measure.

Rather uneventful were 1908 and 1909. We rehearsed steadily and managed to do three plays. A visit from Mr. Laurence Irving, for whom we played *Pygmalion and Galatea* and *Kerry*, encouraged us very much. As he remained through the performance he must have believed we were worth seeing.

In 1910 we gave Galsworthy's *The Silver Box* with such favorable press comments and such large patronage that it was freely predicted that our heads would be turned. But nothing of the sort happened. The company remained earnest and unspoiled, and did not seem to realize at all that in a small way it was becoming famous. By this time most of the group had moved out of the neighborhood, which had become entirely foreign, and all of our new recruits lived far away from Hull-House. We decided to put on Galsworthy's *Justice*. It was very difficult to stage, and required long and frequent rehearsals, but no one complained. It was a source of pride to us all, when we finally produced the play—which ran for ten nights—that after the first performance, every seat for every night was sold. Shortly after this Mr. Galsworthy paid a visit to America, and was entertained at Hull-House by Miss Addams. He was apparently deeply interested in our work and gratified with our success in his play, and we were very proud and pleased with his approval. A few months later we invited Holbrook Blinn, whose rugged, manly style of acting we greatly admired, to be our guest, and we were glad to receive and follow the suggestions he most generously gave.

It was about this time that we decided to change our name to "The Hull-House Players." The old title seemed rather cumbersome, and with our new ambitions we felt ourselves a little more than an association. We had long desired to give an original

play which would deal with local conditions, and quite unexpectedly in the spring of 1911 the opportunity came. A young Jewish girl of the neighborhood, who was making rather ineffective attempts at play-writing, at my request dramatized Leroy Scott's stirring labor story, *The Walking Delegate*. We presented this, after many alterations and much hard work, with great success. Naturally the play lacked the symmetry and finish an older dramatist might have given it, but it was a "thriller" after all, and we who live in the stir and stress of the labor movement found it, as one critic said, "uncanny in its realism." The final performance was marked with a touch of romance, for the young author was married in the morning and came to see her play at night with all her bridal party. Miss Addams gave a reception to celebrate the event, to which players, bridal party, and residents were all bidden, and so the season closed in happiness and triumph.

I do not wish it to be supposed that the career of the Players had all this time been altogether untroubled. Stage life, even for amateurs, is not all "beer and skittles," and many "downs" as well as "ups" had been experienced. The local dramatic critics, who were in the main friendly to us, occasionally gave us what is known as a "roast." Probably we deserved it, or possibly they thought we needed chastening, but such experiences really did us good, for after the first "heart-break" the company pulled itself together and for the next two or three plays, I was careful to choose something that would help us to correct the weakness that had been so ruthlessly pointed out. One thing that operated greatly to our disadvantage was that, after we played *The Pillars of Society*, many people and some newspapers which should have known better, persisted in regarding us

as being on a professional basis, quite ignoring the fact that every member of the company, as well as I myself, was a wage earner, and that only two evenings at most could be given to rehearsals. It is needless to say that, try as we might, we could not live up to any such standard as that, but the effort we made was valuable, and being compared to companies "down town" and praised or blamed accordingly, an incentive to study and to strive for professional accuracy and skill.

In 1912, by permission of Mr. Galsworthy and the courtesy of Mr. Winthrop Ames, we were able to present *The Pigeon*. This play was a success, quite as much, we felt sure, because it was well done as because it was new. Following six performances of this, we put on a number of short Irish plays, which had just begun to appear in print. I know we did these well. Six of the company were of Irish parentage. They found it easy to acquire a delicious brogue, and they seemed to catch instinctively the spirit of the author. Many who "came to scoff, remained to pray" when we gave these charming little plays, and while we were still in the spell they had cast about us, something came which, in a way, changed the whole current of our experience. This was the advent of the Irish Players. Of course we knew all about them. We had produced some of their plays, and the fact that they, too, had been simple, private folk who acted for pure love of acting, regardless of any personal sacrifice, was in itself a powerful appeal. We were present at their first night in Chicago. We met Lady Gregory, who said she had "heard of us" and who promised to come to see us in some of her own plays. This she did soon after, not only once but twice; the second time bringing with her several members of her company

and generously offering us the use of all her plays whenever we wished to give them—a privilege we availed ourselves of gratefully. During the four weeks' stay of these gifted actors, a very warm friendship sprang up between the Irish Players and the Hull-House Players. We saw them in their entire repertory, and a study of their methods was a liberal education. We entertained them in various ways and they seemed as interested and as pleased with us as we were with them. Their parting words, "Why don't you come to Ireland?" sank deep, and, when my company came together in the September following, it seemed not at all an impossible project to make a holiday trip to Europe. After the decision was made, we "buckled to." No professional group ever worked harder. We gave six entirely new plays in our own theatre, among them the difficult *The Tragedy of Nan* and *Kindling*, the latter produced by the courtesy of Miss Margaret Illington. We were very successful in this; the types were familiar to us and the "problem" such an every day one that the characters almost played themselves. In addition to these productions at Hull-House, we played ten engagements in nearby suburbs, and five quite out of town for colleges and the Drama League, all of us, meanwhile, working the usual long hours in various ways every day. The public took an interest in our unique plan and warmly supported us. The Lake Forest Players, who were our staunch friends, generously came in town and gave us a rousing "benefit" in our own theatre. And we played six nights in repertory in a small down-town playhouse, more or less devoted to "uplift drama," and this added a substantial sum. Mr. Percy MacKaye paid us a visit at this time; he carefully watched a long rehearsal and gave us valuable advice and such

words of encouragement that, if there had been any doubt in our minds as to our ability to carry through our plan, it was dispelled. I look back on his visit with grateful remembrance. He "builted better than he knew." In June we gave a full week of plays at Hull-House, which were well patronized, and as a result of all this, by the time we were ready to go, we had earned three thousand dollars. This was not quite enough, but a generous friend loaned us six hundred dollars to make up the difference and on June 28th, 1912, we sailed away for a holiday which was to be "Forty-two days from Chicago." Our passage had been secured and paid for early in the year, and the direction of the tour was in my hands, as all the dramatic work had been from the beginning.

It was a wonderful voyage, crowded with all the charm that invests a "first trip to Europe." One incident especially I remember. Miss Addams was on her way home from the great suffrage meeting in Buda Pesth, and was on the ocean coming west while we were going east. We decided to send her a wireless when we were sufficiently near. "The Hull-House Players on board the Celtic send you loving greeting." It was a wretchedly dark and stormy day, with a rough sea, and it seemed uncanny to receive a reply in four hours. "Love and good wishes. Communicate with Lady Aberdeen when you reach Ireland." This was exciting, but nothing to compare with the wonderful events that were to follow. I have crossed the ocean many times, but never on any trip have I experienced the thrill that came when I saw the coast of Ireland that lovely July day, with my little group of Players close by. It was like a dream come true, and we were all secretly wondering, I am sure, whether we would

not suddenly awake and find ourselves back in Chicago.

It was at the end of an enchanting day at Killarney that a cordial message came from Her Excellency, Lady Aberdeen, who had been with Miss Addams in Paris and there heard of our visit. She welcomed us to Ireland and asked us to give a performance for her in Dublin. This was great news indeed. We had not planned to play anywhere. We had no costumes and no parts or prompt-books; but after a visit to the Vice Regal Lodge in Dublin, where we were invited to tea, we decided to do what we could, and we gave Joseph Medill Patterson's *By-Products* to an audience of some two hundred invited guests. A stage was built for us in historic old St. Patrick's Hall, and I am sure we never played better. A brief program of songs and recitations by the company preceded the play, and after the felicitations and responses that followed it there was dancing in a wonderful ball-room till hours much later than most of us were accustomed to.

We were greatly disappointed to find that our friends, the Irish Players, were still in London, but Mr. Lennox Robinson wired a welcome and directed that the Abbey Theatre should be opened for us, and the visit we paid to their professional home was most interesting.

A long time after, on an "occasion" one of my girls, whose "Irish Eyes of Blue" had been suspiciously moist more than once on this wonderful journey, "dropped into poetry" to add to the general festivity. Her verses were never intended to be seen outside the members of our own dramatic family, and I am quoting from them at the risk of her displeasure. She is still a player.

I want to hear the Shannon Bells, see Dublin on the Liffy,
 Visit "Mrs. Aberdeen" and dance in marble halls.
 I can shut my eyes and dream, and I'm back there in a
 jiffy,
 Glengariff, dear old Bantry Bay, the roads with vine-
 clad walls.

The next day we crossed the Channel. All good Americans who make the stage a profession go to Stratford, and we wished to be no exception. The Countess of Warwick had asked us, before we left America, to be her guests at Warwick Castle, but before we reached there, I received a letter telling of the serious illness of her husband, and of her inability to meet us, but adding that the Castle would be opened and that we should be shown everything we desired to see. We were very sorry to miss the pleasure of meeting Lady Warwick, but we had a long lovely day on the grounds and in the Castle, unhurried and undisturbed, exploring far beyond the limits of the regular tourists, who, fortunately for us, were not present to annoy, for this was Sunday when the general public is not admitted.

Five wonderful crowded days in London followed. Surely no one ever saw so much before in so short a time. We "dashed about in cabs," we visited churches and parks, and night found us enjoying the delightful plays that were on in London theatres. One especially interesting incident of our stay was an interview with Granville Barker, who received us in his own theatre. He was very cordial and told us we might produce "The Voysey Inheritance" in our theatre if we chose, although he added he could "see no reason on earth why we should wish to do so."

The London engagement of the Irish Players closed while we were there and we were greatly

pleased to have Miss Eithne Magee, the ingenue of their company (since their leading lady) join us for the remainder of our tour. She fitted admirably into our scheme and we parted from her at Dover ten days later with regret, after voting her a lifelong member of our dramatic family.

And then came five exciting days in Paris, with no one ever weary and the interest never flagging. Two days at Amsterdam, one at The Hague, then Antwerp and then—it was all over. On the last night I sat very late with my young people around a table in a little cafe near the Cathedral. They sang all the songs they knew and we wished with all our hearts that we might come again and see it all once more. But war is cruel and very long—and alas. Antwerp can never be the same again.

We worked very diligently in the autumn of 1913, for we had a debt of six hundred dollars to pay, but January saw us clear of this, and the six months after that were uneventful. In October, 1914, we re-organized, a step made necessary by natural changes which time had brought about. Two members of the group left us for the professional stage, and one found employment in another city. It then seemed best to set aside the old rule limiting the company to fourteen and to bring in a number of young people who had long been on our waiting list. With the new blood thus added we found fresh inspiration, and it is said the best year's record we have ever made is that of the last one just closed. We were so fortunate as to secure four short plays by Chicago authors for our final production in June, three of which were entirely new. The four performances, which we gave of these plays, were notably successful and we hope other opportunities to present works by American authors will be afforded

us. Visits from Cyril Maude, Miss Elsie Ferguson and other professional players brightened up the year, and their words of encouragement helped us over the inevitable hard places.

The season of 1915-16 began in November with four performances of *Rutherford and Son* by Githa Sowerby, which Mr. Winthrop Ames generously released to us for production in our own theatre. This play we enjoyed immensely. The rugged strength of the characters appealed to us and the interpretation we gave was warmly commended. Early in February we revived *The Pillars of Society*, first produced in 1905. It was encouraging to note the changed standards of the company since those early days. The improved "study"; the facility with "business" and the reading, which won the approval of a severe Norwegian critic, brought joy to the heart of the director, who sometimes, in discouraged moments, confesses to wondering "if it really is worth while."

In April of the present year we presented an evening of comedy, and we hope to secure for our final production in June four short plays by American authors. One has already been chosen and many others we hope will be submitted before we really begin work.

I have tried to tell the story of our fourteen years of existence as simply as possible. We have fallen short in many things, but we have succeeded in more, and we have loved our work all the time. Failures have been but a temporary drawback, and we have used adverse criticism as an incentive to better things. We have gained our chief following by presenting plays which the commercial theatre is apt to overlook, but which a certain group in every community really desires to see. What we have accom-

plished, I am convinced any amateur company can do with equal zeal and patience, and there is to be found, both for teacher and pupils, infinite pleasure in the doing. It means hard work, but nothing is ever gained by dilettante methods, and the lessons of united effort, the added culture, and the interest in the best dramatic literature that such an organization can arouse in any community makes the struggle a valuable social contribution. More amateurs doing better work might help to bring back what we love to call the "palmy days of the theatre" when the "play" really was the thing, and the omnipresent "movie" had not won so much affection from the American public.

LAURA DAINY PELHAM.

COMMON SENSE AND PLAY-WRITING.

The Technique of Play Writing, by Charlton Andrews: Introduction by J. Berg Esenwein (The Writer's Library). The Home Correspondence School, Springfield, Mass., 1915.

To the writing of plays there is no royal road. He who would traverse the way of Shakspeare and of Ibsen must be prepared, however well endowed he may be, not alone for intensive effort, but for recurring faintness of heart and even for failure. Perhaps it was this that saved Smollett for the novel and Stevenson for the romance. The one question is, How may the venturer attain to his maximum of expertness with the minimum of waste? For Shakspeare and Ibsen and Pinero practice, sometimes in acting, sometimes in writing, aided in attaining the goal. For our would-be playwrights Mr. Andrews has attempted to provide a more comfortable way. But no way can be aught but arduous. This is the protection of the public.

Mr. Andrews's *Technique of Playwriting* embodies some twenty lessons in the handling of dramatic material. After an author's foreword, an introduction on the modern play by Dr. Esenwein, and a glossary, Mr. Andrews begins his book proper with some words upon the play and its writer, and then in his second chapter proceeds to the theme. Chapter III deals with the elements, Chapter IV with the plot and some of its fundamentals, Chapter XI with devices and conventions, and so on. In the appendices are included a specimen scenario, specimen pages of the manuscripts of plays, which are repro-

duced in two colors, and certain lists of plays and helpful books. In short, the effort is made to cover both theory and practice, but always with that emphasis upon the writing of the drama which is its due.

In all this the spirit is admirable. About no form of writing can one less afford to dogmatize than about the drama. The chief fault which a student or a teacher with a particle of historical perspective will find with the rigid and impeccable Freytag, Mr. Price, and even the somewhat timid Miss Woodbridge is the *ex-cathedra* attitude. Nor is Mr. William Archer, ever urbane, wholly free from a suspicion of it. Here, during what Mr. Andrews calls our "‘open season’ for radicals fond of gunning for dramatic technique" he wings his first bird. The art of the drama is not a matter of rule and line. It stands fixed upon principles which, however firm and (*perhaps*) eternal, suffer in succeeding generations endless permutations and combinations. Yet grasped, mastered, bent to the will of the dramatist these principles must be, if the play is to "march." After all is said, that is the only test of any drama. As Sir Arthur Pinero put it, a play must tell a story in dialogue "in such skilfully devised form and order as shall, within the limits of an ordinary theatrical representation, give rise to the greatest possible amount of that peculiar kind of emotional effect, the production of which is the one great function of the theatre." Those "high brows"—I quote the phrase from the *New York Times*—whom Professor Matthews justly attacks and those persons who persist in seeing in Hauptmann's *Weavers* not only a great thesis but a great play, would do well to take to heart the wisdom and the insight of Sir Arthur.

That Mr. Andrews stands, as it were, baffled when

he turns to the problem of the genesis of a play is a sign not of weakness but of strength and perspicacity. No one knows how this or that dramatist first conceived his material. Indeed, it is unlikely that the dramatist himself could trace with any helpful accuracy the growth of the idea within his brain. More than one have tried; far more than one have failed. If any could, his experience would be of small value to the next learner, except to demonstrate the futility of formulae in play-writing. Perhaps this proof, this candid introspective admission, would give the would-be dramatist the courage to attempt the working out of his own salvation, if that salvation were to be his ultimate portion.

It is in a way unfortunate that Mr. Andrews finds it necessary to illustrate the growth of a dramatic idea by beginning with a theme and, relatively, to slight starting with an incident. The futility of beginning with a theme is amply demonstrated by the readiness with which Wordsworth's "The world is too much with us" becomes unrecognizable as Mr. Andrews's own ideas for a play grows complex. The truth is that good ideas for plays are born and not made; it is only in training that the machined product may be of value.

It is not unlikely that the genesis of a play runs something like this. In the mind of the true dramatist there exists a continual dramatic ferment. From time to time a particle nucleates, and to it attach other particles, then still others which for the moment may seem unrelated. This constitutes the first, the unconscious stage. The second is conscious. The dramatist, his mind controlled by the art he has learned, proceeds, like a sculptor at work upon a sketch, to shape and mould, to add and take away, till before he or, less still, any one else, is aware, his

play has grown to the point at which he is ready to write, and the theme has emerged not wholly because of the dramatist, but a little in spite of him.

When the playwright has passed this second stage, he should be helped by Mr. Andrews's book. It is nothing if it is not practical—a hateful word for a paramount quality. The chapter on the making of scenarios and other mechanical processes, accompanied by a specimen scenario of Rostand's *Cyrano*—a skilful bit of work as regards “action words”—and the chapter on self-criticism are in possibility of actual use second only to that on placing the play. What of the book Mr. Andrews has written seems sound. One may quarrel at times with sentences left unformed, but the style has ease if not grace. On the other hand, one wishes one might say as much for Dr. Esenwein's questions and exercises. These are often too glib to be inviting and on the whole they leave one the impression of being hard and fast, machine-made. Yet considering Dr. Esenwein's success in teaching the short story, one hardly dares doubt that with a certain type of student they will succeed.

If more of our playwrights had studied Mr. Andrews's book, his prayer for the dramatic future of this country might seem nearer an answer.

HOWARD J. SAVAGE.

THE CINEMATOGRAPH AS ART



THE thoughtful exposition of the "movies" in their social relation to the culture of the masses, which was recently published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, is essentially sound, provided that the reader assumes the impossibility of development in the art of the cinematograph. Judging the cinematograph by what it is today, the outlook is discouraging. But a little acquaintance with the ideals of the cinematograph as it might be, and as certain Continental régisseurs dream of transforming it, will reveal the wildest possibilities of artistic expression in its future development, and a democratic extension of noble imaginative influence which it is most difficult to measure.

The wonderful popularity enjoyed by the cinematograph during the last decade has been for a long time a subject of eager discussion in those circles which have the interests of the theatre at heart. The various groups of art-workers connected with the theatre—the dramatists, the actors, and the artists—are directly involved in the problem, and it is interesting to note how different has been the attitude revealed toward it by each of these sections. The artists, perhaps the most cultured of these three groups from the standpoint of art, have simply ignored the cinematograph, regarding it as something so crude and inartistic as to be unworthy of serious notice. It is true that a few genuine experiments have been made in this direction, but for several reasons, chiefly because the artists failed to

comprehend the real nature of their medium, they have all proved a complete failure.

The attitude of most actors has been much more condescending. Those actors who have generally concerned themselves very little with matters of art, accepted the cinematograph with the docile humility accorded to all things in the natural order. They transferred to the new invention whatever knowledge of drama they had gained on the legitimate stage, and supplied only one new feature: extreme exaggeration in mimicry and action, which they held to be the chief peculiarity of moving pictures. On the other hand, the more advanced members of the theatrical profession, who have been really anxious to establish on the stage the principles of vital art, however much they may have differed in their interpretation of them, at once realized the danger which threatened the drama from the encroachment of the modern cinematograph theatres, and did not hesitate to proclaim a most resolute opposition in an endeavor to protect their art from being contaminated by this vulgar "mechanical" device. Thus we see large sections of the community, for whom art is an object of vital faith, rejecting the cinematograph as a medium devoid of any artistic qualities. But it would be wrong to infer that it has always lacked faithful champions. Strange as it may seem, these have come from the group which is furthest removed from the actual problems of the theatre—the dramatists. As might be expected, the only fault that the litterateurs were able to detect in moving pictures was in the plot, and so they set themselves the task of remedying it. With enviable ease, they began to pour out elaborate philosophical dramas, mystery plays, tragedies, "literary" melodramas, and what not, in order to dem-

onstrate what artistic possibilities have been lying dormant in the neglected and abused cinematograph. Once they found that the theatre was no longer held in popular esteem, they had no compunction in erecting their rostrum on the picture-screen, the more so as they perceived in it the fulfilment of two objects: the popularization of the drama and the elevation of moving pictures to a higher artistic level. We need only mention such names as Gabriele D'Annunzio and Leonid Andreyev to show what resolute and self-confident arch-priests of literature have undertaken the task of reforming the moving picture play. But though their attempts have raised a host of arguments and controversies among all who are interested in the theatre, there can be little doubt that failure must be the inevitable result of their efforts. Their defence of the pictures is as inherently fallacious as the opposition of artists and actors, since both are the outcome of a complete failure to understand the peculiar nature of the cinematograph as a medium of art. If the dramatists' defence leaves us entirely unmoved, since it comes from virtual outsiders, we cannot but deplore the opposition of those who should be the first and foremost exponents of the new art. For there is an artistic future for the cinematograph, a future as great as any form of artistic drama can hope to attain. We may ignore the criticisms of those who condemn as utterly vulgar all moving pictures, photographs, and gramophones, as well as most other products of our resourceful mechanical genius. These well-intentioned dilettantes are only victims of prevailing artistic conventions, and have no standard of their own by which they may discriminate between what is art and what is not. The future of the cinematograph does not rest with them. It de-

pend upon those enlightened and liberal lovers of art who can see beyond the conventions of the moment, who possess a range of sympathies which is already wide enough to embrace such divergent revelations as we find in the static art of Egypt, the decorativeness of Eastern art, and the rudimentary work of Cézanne and Matisse, or to refer strictly to the domain of drama, the mediæval booth, the puppet show, and the productions of Mr. E. Gordon Craig. Theirs is the task of creating the canons and standards, of shaping the conventions of cinematographic art, and of building up a tradition which will pass, in due course, through the period when it is merely fashionable, and attain finally the position of an acknowledged medium for artistic expression.

It is with the object of securing a more sympathetic attitude for this discredited medium that I venture, however conscious of the heresy, to advance a plea for the cinematograph as a vehicle of genuine art-expression.

II

Much has been said in the press about the issues involved in the problem of moving pictures: their special appeal to the masses; their competition with the theatre; whether they are to supersede the latter, or whether they are doomed to be merely a transient fashion and eventually disappear; their artistic crudity; that is to say, whether they are a reversal to the methods of the booth, and whether they indicate the birth of a new democratic art; and many other similar questions. With these issues we shall not concern ourselves at present. Without under-rating their interest and importance, we hold that they overlook the most essential factor of the problem: the peculiar nature of the medium which alone

should form the basis of its possible artistic application. Before we are able to enter upon a discussion of this problem, a number of deep-rooted popular misconceptions must be cleared away. I almost despair of my task, for in the sphere of ideas, as in that of biology, the lowest forms are the most tenacious of life.

One of the critic's first duties is discrimination. Yet the criticisms hurled so liberally from all sides at the cinematograph have been little distinguished by this character. Two things which are entirely distinct have been persistently confused by all critics: the cinematograph as a medium, and the cinematograph theatre as we know it at the present time. That the second is below criticism—indeed, something coarse, crude, and altogether ugly—can be easily and unreservedly admitted. But to deduce from this fact the impossibility of an artistic cinematograph betrays a lack of logic and imagination. It is evident, in the first place, that many drawbacks of the modern moving-picture play are in no way connected with the cinematograph as a peculiar medium of dramatic expression. For example, take the vulgar realism of moving pictures about which we hear so many complaints. Is it a peculiar feature of the cinematograph? The students of the theatre will agree that naturalism as vulgar as this ruled the legitimate stage long before the cinematograph became a competitor. The pictures simply followed along the beaten track, bringing to logical absurdity what the legitimate drama, not endowed with the infinite resourcefulness of its competitor, could only pursue half way. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the many similar drawbacks of the cinematograph. We are not so much concerned with what it actually is as with what it might be. The problem that really

matters may be stated in the following words: Is the cinematograph a medium capable of artistic achievement in the two fields that make up the art of the stage—the dramatic field and the pictorial field? The answer to this question necessarily involves discussing the vexed question of mechanical art. However reluctant I may be to touch upon this controversy, I am unable to avoid it altogether. So I bow before the inevitable, and shall try to dispose of it in the briefest possible manner.

It is often contended that automatic mechanism can never attain to anything like artistic perfection, and that consequently there is no artistic future for the cinematograph.

It is obvious that the whole argument stands or falls with the definition of "mechanism." But this definition is never stated in anything like exact terms. That there are no absolutely automatic mechanisms hardly needs to be pointed out. All mechanisms must be controlled by human power at one moment or another, and, what is still more important, they are all products of human intelligence. Whatever forces may be involved in their operation are brought together by the action of human thought compressed and wound up like a spring, and constituting their actual prime mover throughout the whole process of their operation. Thus the problem is reduced to defining the degree of independence from immediate human control and power which mechanism can possess. This is so indeterminate that we see similar kinds of action styled mechanical in one case, and highly individual in another. Who will doubt, for instance, that the action of an organ played at a concert is individual, and that of a locomotive engine mechanical? Yet it cannot be disputed that the second requires as much skill and personal

control as the first. The point is not whether these operations are art or are not art, but whether they are mechanical or non-mechanical. I maintain that there is no real distinction between the one and the other, and that both may serve artistic ends if properly utilized.

One more example of the prevailing confusion of thought on this subject: the gramophone is admittedly a mechanical contrivance and so is the telephone; yet no one listening to the opera through the telephone ever says that the music he hears is a mechanical production. The sole difference, however, that exists between this music and its record on the gramophone, is that the gramophone fixes only one stage of the process—the vibrations of the telephone membrane—and allows one to “switch on” the flow of sound at will, while the telephone receives and transmits the sound in one continuous process.

These two illustrations not only show the vague popular use of the term “mechanical,” but also the elements that go to make up the significance of this term. They are three: complexity of mechanism, the number of intermediate stages, and the extent of time between the application of human power and the appearance of the effect. It is only necessary to rid the mind of the prejudice for a moment to be able to see that not a single one of these elements is in any way incompatible with artistic work and achievement. And if at the present time mechanical methods of production under the capitalistic system have served to destroy whatever artistic feeling the producer may have had, this does not militate against the mechanical methods as such, but rather against the way they are used in our time.

III

Now let us examine the problem itself. First of all, let us endeavor to realize the peculiar nature of the cinema drama, and then we shall be able to see how far this "mechanical" medium lends itself to artistic expression.

One of the most startling facts about cinematograph productions is that the actors who play for these pictures are all members of the legitimate dramatic profession. Their attainments on the theatre stage need not be discussed in this instance, but it seems quite apparent that of cinema acting they understand very little indeed. The cinema drama raises some of the most fundamental problems of art. But what do they know about them? Are they aware that the cinematograph play is the most abstract form of the pantomime? Do they realize that if there is any stage on which the laws of movement should reign supreme, it is the cinematograph stage? If they did, they would not have monopolized the cinematograph play, but would have left it to dancers, clowns, and acrobats who do know something about the laws of movement. By no means do I presume to say that dancers and clowns are necessarily artists. But movement is their natural element, and it is also movement that constitutes the real nature of the cinematograph. The patrons and devotees of present-day pictures may boast of their "wonderful realistic effects," but this popular conception only betrays a complete failure to grasp one salient fact: viewed from the standpoint of the drama, just as from many other standpoints of which more will be said later on, the cinematograph is essentially and preëminently dynamic. It is necessary at this point to realize the effect of picture plays

if this principle of pure movement were recognized throughout. Rolling eyes and wild gesticulation would be abolished. Sham "natural" talking would give place to mimicry and gesture, free and eloquent. The movements of the actors would no longer imitate actual life, but would synthetically express it in the peculiar laws of rhythmic motion. Pantomimes, harlequinades, ballets would take the place of the present melodramas and comical pictures, thus giving adequate expression to the wordless nature of the medium. Would it be possible, then, to argue that there is no art in the cinematograph? So far as the dramatic aspect is concerned, this at any rate would constitute a most decisive step in the direction of art. And other advances would immediately follow, once the fundamental principle was firmly established.

It is often contended that the presence in bodily form of the actor in the play is the *sine qua non* of artistic drama. This view is held alike by those who believe in realism on the stage and by those who do not. The attitude of the latter is particularly droll. After disposing of all the realistic mummery, they cling to the last citadel of the "true-to-nature" gospel of art, the bodily shell of the actor. Why, is it not his personality that really matters? And is that expressed only in the frail physical body of the actor? To the spectator of some artistic culture it is in a sense irrelevant whether the acting on the stage is performed by living persons, by dolls, or by cinematograph shadows. The effect in each case must necessarily be different, but only in so far as the artistic properties of each of these media of drama differ from one another. Their absolute artistic value remains unaffected by their being animate or inanimate. In fact, it is open to argument, whether

man is at all suitable as a medium of dramatic art, as readers of Mr. E. Gordon Craig already know. But we need not go so far. In the case of cinema drama, we do not dispense with the actor. We dispense only with his body. Perhaps those who cannot reconcile themselves to this fact will find comfort in reflecting upon the time when poets were gradually led to recognize that singing a poem in person is not the only way of rendering the artistic beauties of the composition. In our age of reduplication, to the list of arts which already resort to this process (poetry, music, lithography, etching), we now add the sacred art of the theatre. It is a process of natural development, and it would be sheer stupidity on our part if we continued to ignore it or to notice only its outward features. Just as it did not degrade the profession of the painter when he realized the artistic possibilities of lithography, so it will not degrade the modern actor if he makes full use of the new medium which human ingenuity has placed at his command. The real and the only problem for him is to find out what actually constituted the peculiar properties of the medium and how these properties should be managed to achieve the highest artistic effect. The fact that the problem can be solved only by practice and experiment and that present-day cinematograph practice has produced in the artistic sense some appalling results, must not be taken as proof of the inartistic nature of the medium itself. The truth of this statement has been shown above as applied to the playing of actors. It will be seen that it is equally true applied to the pictorial element of stage production.

IV

The peculiar optical effects of the cinematograph are a resultant of two processes: the photographic process of making the film, and the process of projecting the film on the screen.

What artistic possibilities do these processes possess?

There is no need to enter in this instance upon a discussion of photography as art. Its shortcomings as a medium and the triteness of the average photographic work can hardly be disputed. But only narrow prejudice can deny it any artistic quality whatever. The magnificent work so often found at various photographic exhibitions proves most conclusively that photography and art are not so incompatible as some of our purists would like us to believe.

The same is the case with cinema photography. So long as it remains in the hands of mere operators and chemists, so long will its pictorial value be on a par with the artistic conceptions held by these craftsmen. And this can hardly be wondered at, seeing that the nature of the new medium, to be properly understood, requires such a culture of mind as is seldom met with even amongst professional exponents of art.

The greatest question it raises is that of the psychological significance pertaining to its various dramatic and pictorial forms.

One important fact must be stated at the outset. The cinematograph has at its command two distinct ways of producing plays: the two-dimensional production on the ordinary screen, and the three-dimensional production by means of different stereoscopic devices and of the kineplastikon. Too much stress.

cannot be laid upon this distinction. Its importance is enormous, since in the two forms of space—of two, and of three dimensions—we obtain two aspects of the world which are opposed to each other in their very elements. Without going deeply into the philosophical and psychological nature of these forms of space, it may be said that the first symbolizes and incarnates the principles of continuity, cosmic unity, spontaneity, pure sentiment and kindred psychic experiences, whilst the second stands for differentiation, individuality, clear-consciousness, and the like, thus forming two distinct worlds: one monistic, fused into one integral whole, and the other atomistic, broken into numberless mutually opposed units. The same two principles obtain in the theatre. The staging in one plane produces an effect of dissolving the world, when reproduced in the mind of the audience. It destroys the barrier between the stage and the spectator, turning the play from a mere spectacle into an actual incident in the life of the audience, an incident which, though experienced passively, enters into the soul of the spectator as an integral element of his being. Such, for instance, is the effect of some of Maurice Maeterlinck's religious plays when staged in one plane. This method may be called subjective-monistic. Its counterpart is the objective-monistic method, which again destroys the barrier between the stage and the audience, but this time by transporting the spectator on to the stage and making him actively participate in the play. The early forms of the Greek drama and the mediæval mystery plays may be quoted here as examples of this method, though the first also contains considerable elements of subjectivity.

The other way of apprehending the universe is based on the consciousness of all its component parts

or atoms—on the opposition of self and non-self. The world acquires an atomistic aspect. The self-affirming personality always feels its aloofness from the ambience. By a process of active contemplation it may embrace and absorb this encompassing world, but it never fuses into it. In the theatre this sovereignty of self-affirming personality finds its expression, on the one hand, in the abstractly sculpturesque stagings of Mr. E. Gordon Craig, which we may rightly call subjective-atomistic. These definitions may appear somewhat obscure, but they show the problems of staging which obtrude in the cinematograph, determining the pictorial representation. The cinematograph possesses a greater command of space than the legitimate stage, or than painting on flat surfaces. It is able, and therefore is obliged, to discriminate between the different methods of pictorial presentment. Unlike the others, it can afford to be logical. But it would only gain in effect and would reveal the inner monistic nature of the two-dimensional space if it were more consistent and eliminated every atom of natural relief. Play of lines and colors is all that is required on the flat screen, and if properties of the medium have, as everybody believes nowadays, any importance in the achievement of artistic effect, then it is obvious that the cinematograph can only gain by consistent application of the principle of two-dimensional space to pictures on the ordinary screen.

On the other hand, to represent the atomistic world as distinct from the self-conscious personality, the method of three-dimensional staging affords both the actor and the pictorial artist unlimited scope for new and altogether artistic achievements.

The stagings of Mr. E. Gordon Craig, for instance, unfetter and expand the stage. They are not the-

atrical in the narrow sense of the word. They purport to create on the boards a world of their own, one entirely distinct from the stage world, however far it may be removed from the realistic world. But the stage is only a stage, and the space on it has its well-known limitations. The case with the stereoscopic cinematograph is different. Its command of space is practically boundless. It can create another world and place it before the eyes of the audience to watch it with admiration, sympathy, or disdain. The stereoscopic cinematograph in the hands of real artists could raise even realistic drama (in its wordless form, of course) to its proper position, representing the world stated objectively and watched from outside.

As to the pictorial artist, both the plane and the stereoscopic moving picture open before him a new field for artistic development. It would be impossible at the present stage of the cinematograph's development to discuss in detail the multifarious problems arising out of the application of this new process. Only practical experience could give satisfactory answers to many of these questions. But there are some general features of the cinematopictorial process, which already allow of analysis and discussion.

The most important of them is the dynamic character of the cinematograph. In addition to the third dimension which the cinematograph provides by stereoscopic projection, it possesses yet another coordinate—time. How does this element enter into the pictorial and plastic arts? We know the Egyptians answered this question by discarding the notion itself. Instead of transient time they imparted to their immovable, frigid productions a spirit of eternity. The Greeks, the artists of the Renaissance,

and most modern artists try to give the impression of movement by arranging the elements of a picture or a statue in such a way that the eye must travel over the production.

Now the cinematograph is the first medium by which one can deal with time fairly and squarely without recourse to the tricks of the cubist or futurist. Is that not in itself a sufficient reason why artists should seize this unique opportunity?

Following the distinction stated above, we shall have two branches of this mobile art: the flat screen cinematograph (the realm of the flat-surface artist), and the stereoscopic cinematograph (the realm of the sculptor who thinks in form and color). At present, the only indications of this future mobile art are found in the best theatrical productions. I may point out as examples the exquisite stagings of Russian ballets by Bakst, Anisfeld, and Golovin, and their designs for costumes in particular, since in the varying combinations of lines and colors on the background of the scenery the basis of the mobile art is present implicitly.

V

It is necessary at this point, in the light of the foregoing theories, to consider what position the artist will occupy in future cinematograph productions. In the stereoscopic cinematograph he has already at his command nearly all that he can desire. It is true that the colors of life are yet wanting, but an artist can obtain a real color-tone from black and white. Moreover he can tone the film just as he pleases, so that after all he is not entirely deprived of color. Otherwise the stereoscopic cinema photography leaves hardly anything to be desired. It gives a facsimile reproduction, color excepted, of

the actual scene. If the legitimate stage affords scope for the application of artistic talents, the stereoscopic cinematograph has the additional advantage of a much greater command of space than the stage.

The problems of photography in the one-plane cinematograph are somewhat different. They are akin to those met with in other arts dealing with the flat surface; on the other hand, they are naturally distinguished from them in so far as they all depend on the mobile conditions of the cinematograph. The influence of these conditions on other artistic effects can be judged from the fact that in moving pictures, we are seldom able to fix our attention on one given position for any considerable length of time. This being so, the criteria of art applied to moving pictures must be obviously different from those applied to paintings or lithographs. The laws of composition cannot possibly be the same. What they are I shall not here attempt to define, but an artist who took up the cinematograph would find that such laws do exist and, gradually, by experiment and practice, he would subject them to his control. At present, our ideas on mobile composition are so undeveloped and so crude that posterity will hardly be able to believe that they were ever held. It is only necessary to remind ourselves of the revolution started in this field by Jacques-Dalcroze with his rhythmic gymnastics. It is still open to an artist to give it a worthy counterpart in fixing it on the film. In this connection the attempts made by Mr. A. Wallace Rimington in England, and by A. Scriabin, the well-known composer, in Russia, to create a new art of color-music are of interest. Mr. Rimington has already given us a detailed exposition of his theory and a description of the color-organ, the in-

strument he specially invented for this purpose. There can be little doubt that this new form of art will have a great future, and that in one way or another it will become one of the most essential components of the artistic cinematograph.

The second cinema photographic problem is akin to the question of ordinary photographic prints. Line drawing being excluded by the nature of photography as we at present know it, the problem is how to achieve the best results with a medium similar in character to the wash. The problem lies not so much with the lighting of models as with the production of the film and projection on the screen. Greater artistic effect would probably be achieved on screens of more solid consistency than those now in vogue, on screens of a grained surface, such as a white plastered wall would provide. Then the lights and shades on the film should give more concentrated, solid, and flat masses, thus obviating unnecessary details, which are often annoyingly conspicuous. The silhouette picture film, which is practically unknown, possesses wonderful possibilities. For fairy-tales or grotesque and sentimental stories, hardly any medium could be more fitting.

VI

In conclusion, let me recapitulate the principal points. The artistic failure of the modern cinematograph is due solely to lack of understanding of this medium's peculiar properties. It is dynamic throughout. Expression of the rhythmically moving body must be the only law of the actor, expression of rhythmically moving form and color the only law of the pictorial artist.

The actor must cease ignoring the dumb nature of the cinematograph in performing "realistic"

plays. Pantomime and ballet are the only forms open to him. He can achieve greatly varying psychological effects by staging his plays in two or three dimensions. The silhouette is the form of acting where the one-plane principle of staging finds its most complete expression.

The pictorial artist must discriminate between the flat-screen and the stereoscopic cinematograph projection. With the first, he must try to eliminate all relief, to evolve the color value of light and shade, and to make the screen as good an artistic medium as paper is. With the second, he must solve the complicated problems of planes and volumes which this stereoscopic form of projection places before him. In application to both methods he must evolve the formulæ of mobile composition and mobile color.

So much for the actor and for the artist.

Above all, however, the cinematograph needs men of genius, of deep insight, and of great spiritual culture. More than the theatre it is a synthetic form of art, as both the dramatic and the pictorial arts constitute the basic elements of its nature. To be raised from its present state of degradation it requires men who combine a genius for dramatic and pictorial presentation with the deep wisdom of sages. It requires that clear-consciousness without which there is no real personality and no individual feeling of the world.

Art is the revelation of the human spirit in everything capable of expressing it, conditioned only by the nature of the medium used. So the cinematograph will rise to the level of art when men of great intelligence and insight express themselves in forms determined by the natural properties of this new medium. Everything seems to indicate that we shall not have long to wait for this fulfillment.

ALEXANDER BAKSHY.

THE UNCHASTENED WOMAN.

The Unchastened Woman. A play by Louis K. Anspacher. Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York.



MAY not the tradition of the difficulty of acting Shakespeare resolve itself largely into a question of having some standard to measure up to? The average Shakespearean audience, even of today, has read the play before coming to the theatre, or has seen some other performance, or at least has heard of other players, and how they interpreted such and such characters. One goes to the modern play, on the other hand, unprepared to make demands. There is nothing for us but to accept, with as good a grace as possible, the crumbs (by way of interpretation) which are thrown to us. Sometimes more is given, sometimes less; but with no idea of the play as it came from the brain of the author, how is one to judge? For acting is not a matter of beauty of form or face, not even of gesture and voice, although these things enter into it, but of adequate interpretation. Now one critic today may be certain that Miss Blue-eyes does not know how to act, and that Miss Brown-eyes does; one may favor the shrill and acid, another the low-voiced and sweet; one may deem that much puckering of the brow and placing of the finger upon the supraorbital nerve denotes great cerebration, another may hold indistinct enunciation in no way a

handicap to fame—but this is not criticism. I remember hearing Mr. William Henderson some years ago give a lecture on Musical Criticism as a Profession before the students of the Columbia School of Journalism. It was illuminating to note the preparation he underwent in order to review in his paper the first performance of a new opera by Richard Strauss. First, he borrowed the score and studied that religiously, then he attended several rehearsals, and finally went with pencil well sharpened, I should imagine, to attend the opening night. He knew his text, he was ready not alone to write of the opera as opera in relation to other works of the composer, but he was prepared by his knowledge of the art of singing and operatic acting to judge of the individual merit of each member of the cast. It was suggestive of the times perhaps quite as much as of the man, that Mr. Clayton Hamilton, who followed Mr. Henderson in the same series of lectures, when it came to the Profession of the Dramatic Critic, should have pointed out what made a good play or a bad play, but never once with a single reference to the art of the actor. That acting is an art in itself to be judged separately, whether the play has merit or not, apparently seemed of no consequence. What an interesting shuffle we should have in our stage reputations today if our theatrical critics and audiences were as well prepared to value virtuosity as the critics and audiences of the opera! An opera audience—such as we have in New York—is highly sophisticated, weighing, testing one performance with another; the voice and acting of the soloists, the work of the chorus, the nuances of the orchestra, the magnetism of the leader, the wealth of scenery and costume, all stand in the searching light of comparison, in short, making a conscious demand upon

every performer, a stimulating incentive to do good work.

These remarks are suggested by the publication, while it is still on the boards, of Mr. Anspacher's play, *The Unchastened Woman*. It is all too seldom that we are given the opportunity to oppose the actor's performance with the authority of the author. Possibly the managers have done their best to rob the playwright of all semblance of authority, but the increasing publication of plays is an augury that it is coming back. I remember in reading Mr. Percy MacKaye's *A Thousand Years Ago*, published by the Drama League, how cheap and tawdry by comparison it made the stage production seem. And in the same way, one cannot read the daring, original and thoroughly modern play of Mr. Anspacher's without being forced to realize after all, how inadequate a production it has received. One may be permitted to wonder if, with the test of the printed play at hand, the Playgoing Committee of the New York Drama League would still have said:

"The production is intelligent and excellent throughout. The play is especially well cast and the acting of a high order."

Would that more playwrights were brave enough and idealistic enough to waive the larger monetary return of that intolerable hybrid the novelized drama, and give us their work in the only possible, self-respecting form, the published play! so many interesting, indeed fascinating qualities are revealed in the reading which are not even to be suspected from witnessing it as acted. Not that I mean for a minute to imply that Mr. Anspacher has written a play that "reads better than it acts"—not at all—but that only by reading the play as it comes undistorted from his hand, can we see all that has been

deliberately left out on the stage. A chorus of praise has greeted the acting, but here and there a voice has arisen against the play: one complains of "a lack of clear intention" and calls it "an unveracious, almost fantastically improbable tale." The Drama League Bulletin, quoted above, so full of praise for the acting, rebukes the author for the unconvincing reconciliation of the Sanburys. Of course the play is unconvincing *as it is played*. To any thinking person it is simply inconceivable that so delightful and distinguished a man as Hubert Knollys (acted with rare deftness and charm by Mr. Reeves-Smith) would have endured so long the shrill, ill-bred and hopelessly over-dressed creature of the stage impersonation. Furthermore, if the leading lady were correct in her reading of the part, then the whole play was largely much ado about nothing. If the Caroline Knollys of the printed play were the crude Bohemian whom Miss Stevens visualized for us, if she were nothing more than the mere voluptuous married flirt, she would never have shrunk from scandal and divorce, never have worshiped appearances (having so flagrantly ignored them in her own person), she would never have objected so strenuously to the society of her husband's mistress—in short, there would have been no play. The very *clou* of the play is the heroine's careful conventionality, her adoration of good form, her creed which puts the surface above everything, which objects not to immorality but to the appearance of it. The heroine that Miss Stevens gives us, on the other hand, is a kind of leading lady of the Winter Garden, much betinselled and bedecked, wearing wriggly trains of last year's vintage, serpentine scarves and huge picture hats at the most inopportune moments, of restless manners, impossible gestures, questionable

behaviour and an utter, hopeless lack of distinction. Certainly it is all as far as possible from the proud and dignified leader of New York and Newport, the Mrs. Hubert Knollys of the published play. Utterly heartless, vain, and cattish that lady may have been, but just the same you may be quite certain, a woman more ready to forgive an enemy than commit a social gaucherie, and quite as incapable of wearing last year's gown as of being generous to a rival.

"What do we know about the unchastened woman?" asks a writer in the *New York Evening Journal*, and immediately answers herself by adding "Nothing!" But for this she puts the blame on the wrong person. There are a few pages of the book that have been cut out of the acted play, which would have proved highly illuminating. For instance, the inquiring lady would have learned that Mrs. Knollys was a woman of forty, married over twenty-five years before the opening of the play, and having a married daughter. Furthermore the integrity of the entire play, and particularly the last curtain, suffers from the distortion which follows in making Lawrence Sanbury, the young architect, everything that the author did not intend him to be; instead of being overpowered merely by the vision of success which a wealthy patron holds out to him, he seems to be a victim rather of her *beau yeux*. His perfectly natural and sincere cry, "Why, she's old enough to be my mother!" is thrown out to spare the lady's feelings, and instead of a manly, broad-shouldered, vital young man in love with his wife and wanting success as much for her as for himself, the management saw fit in its infinite wisdom to make him the usual stage picture of the lap dog of a fashionable woman. The author describes him as a handsome, vital looking man of twenty-five, but

we see him as an empty-headed boy of no possible promise, little, narrow-chested, weak-kneed physically and morally, a born adulterer if there ever was one, not at all the kind of man to whom the woman of the "dangerous age" married to the elderly husband turns for emotional excitement. Now beside all this, if the wife of the architect, an efficient, clear-sighted, generous social worker and writer, is turned into a mild, coyly sweet, blue-eyed little girl, hopelessly tongue-tied before the unflinching attacks of her dangerous rival, if Emily Madden, Hubert's mistress, could never be mistaken for a highly executive newspaper woman, if indeed furthermore we find ourselves sharing his wife's wonder at his taste, is it any wonder that some of the characters seem somewhat blurred? Indeed the wonder to me is that in spite of all this, so much of the author's intention did succeed in filtering through!

For this play of Mr. Anspacher's is distinctly a play of character. More than that it is an attempt to show the different reactions of varying characters to the Truth—to break up the white light of Truth into its spectrum. Caroline uses the Truth unscrupulously as a weapon of offence; the Truth makes of her husband a gentle, varnished cynic; it blights Emily, makes of Krellin the anarchist a cosmic humorist, the old charwoman a kindly philosopher, and leaves Hildegarde, the architect's wife, the only one who can stand facing the Truth without being overwhelmed. It is a play of skillful unwinding of the strands of good and evil, a play wherein the intricate threads of action are separated with deft fingers, a play of delicate tones and half lights, and subtle gradations. And yet it is given a production in sharpest blacks and whites. Just as no longer we dub our stage characters "Venture-

well," "Winwife," "Dame Purecraft," "Sneerwell," "Puff," "Surface," and the like, so the realistic drama of today can not tolerate the simple characters that such names would fit. Caroline Knollys has been compared by several reviewers to Hedda Gabler. One calls her "a Hedda without a background," but it is surely not the author who is at fault. Background and atmosphere are of delicate fabric, and in a production such as I have intimated they simply disappear. Caroline is quite as typical a creature of our complex life of today as Hedda was of hers. In the less cramped and restricted life of America, with a fortune in her own right, Caroline acts with far freer rein; she plays her game more skillfully, more openly than Hedda. But both women are fighting with all the weapons at their command the inexorableness of Nature—the one against maternity, the other quite as vainly against old age.

Very likely the management has given the public what it wants. Apparently it dotes on sirens, loves to watch an utterly heartless wife steal another woman's husband from under her nose, believes in the lapdog lover as a necessary accessory of the woman of fashion, more important than well-bred manners or clothes!—it revels in bright colors and tinsel and satins, even if they do not belong in the picture, in sinuous lines, and in what one newspaper writer has chastely called "bodices which invite explorers." But the sad thing in all this is that if there is any one temptation to be resisted by the young author it is the temptation to do what has been done before. It is the one ideal of the manager, the one pitfall of the author. The thing that has been done, alas! is also the thing most easily done! The late Henry James used to insist that

the dramatic form of literature was not open to the subtleties which could be expressed in other forms of fiction. Was he right? Is it really the literary form that is at fault, or the desire of producers and actors to seek the easiest way?

Now all this sheds an interesting light upon the condition of our stage at the moment. It reveals something of what the conscientious playwright must endure if he is to have a production. One of them confessed to me a few days ago that he is fortunate who is able to get sixty per cent of his original intention "across." If we are to be content with playwrights who never go below the surface, whose themes are taken from the latest extras on the street, and as little digested, not much harm is done. But if we are to hope for a generation of playwrights who wish to save their souls by setting down "The very age and body of the time" in all honesty as they see it, writers who have given thought to Life before they have begun to think of royalties, then it is very serious indeed. As Mr. Walter Prichard Eaton very truly has said (but I cannot forgive him for saying that Emily Stevens rose superbly to her opportunity), "We shall never have first-rate drama until we have first-rate minds writing for the stage."

Will first-rate minds be encouraged to write for the stage if actresses not only are to be permitted to distort and twist the author's meaning at will, but are to be applauded for so doing? If no leading lady is to be over twenty-five, if the subtle skeins of action, the delicate shades of character, the conflicting motives which make the joy of great fiction, are to be sacrificed to those less subtle and more understandable ones, if the contradictory impulses of the sophisticated gentlewoman are to be cheapened into the exaggerated lure of a siren, if the emotions of

a Caroline Knollys are to be changed into the simpler ones of the insolent rake, if the delicate machinations of a female Machiavelli are to be translated into the crude husband-stealing of a Cleopatra, then the writer of serious drama would do well, like Ibsen, to depend upon the printed page for his vindication.

ANNIE NATHAN MEYER.

ON THE HIGHWAY

A Dramatic Sketch by Anton Chekhov

Translated from the Russian Original by David A.
Modell, A. M.

THE CHARACTERS

TIKHON YEVTIGNEEV, *keeper of a tavern on the highway.*

SEMION SERGEEVITCH BORTSOV, *a ruined landowner.*

MARIA YEGOROVNA, *his wife.*

SAVVA, *a wandering old penitent.*

NAZAROVNA } *pilgrim women.*
YEFIMOVNA }

FEDIA, *a transient workman.*

YEGOR MERIK, *a tramp.*

KUZMA, *a passer-by.*

A postman.

MARIA YEGOROVNA'S *driver.*

Pilgrims, merchants, travellers, and others.

The action takes place in a province of South Russia. The stage represents Tikhon's tavern. To the right is the bar, with shelves holding bottles. Beyond is a door leading outside. Over the doorway, on the outside, hangs a red, greasy little lantern. The floor and the benches lining the walls are entirely taken up by pilgrims and other travellers. Many, for lack of room, sleep in a sitting posture. It is late at night. As the curtain goes up, thunder is heard and lightning is seen through the doorway.

TIKHON is behind the bar. On one of the benches lounges FEDIA playing a harmonica. Near him sits BORTSOV dressed in threadbare summer clothes. On the floor, by the benches, lie SAVVA, NAZAROVNA, and YEFIMOVNA.

YEFIMOVNA. [*To NAZAROVNA.*] Shake the old man there, *Mátushka*.* He seems to want to give up his soul to God.

NAZAROVNA. [*Lifting from the wanderer's face one end of his great-coat.*] Hey, you man of God, are you still alive or are you dead already?

SAVVA. Why dead? Alive, *Mátushka*. [*He raises himself on his elbows.*] Please cover my feet, my poor woman. So! The right one a little better. That's it, *Mátushka*. God bless you!

NAZAROVNA. [*Covering SAVVA's feet.*] Sleep, *Cátyushka*.

SAVVA. How can one sleep? Would I had the patience to bear this suffering; as for sleep—that doesn't bother me. Sinners don't deserve rest, anyway. What's that noise, pilgrim-mother?

NAZAROVNA. The Lord sends thunder. The wind blows and the rain keeps on beating on the roof and the windows like fine peas. Do you hear? The floodgates of heaven are ajar. [*Thunder is heard.*] Mercy, mercy, mercy!

FEDIA. It thunders, rattles and howls, and there's no end to it! Oo-oo-oo . . . as if the forest murmured. Oo-oo-oo . . . the wind howls like a dog. [*He huddles himself together.*] It's cold! My

* A Russian diminutive derived from the word for mother, but used indiscriminately as a term of address among friends or acquaintances or even strangers. For this and the corresponding masculine term—*Cátyushka* (from the Russian for father)—which I am here introducing, English has no equivalents. The general sense is vaguely expressed by "My dear lady" and "My dear sir," respectively—Translator.

clothes are wringing wet, and the door is wide open. [*He plays quietly.*] My harmonica has swelled up from the rain, boys, or I would give you such a concert as would lift you off your feet. Something grand! A quadrille, say, or a polka maybe, or some Russian couplet. We can do all that. In the city, where I served as hallman in the Grand Hotel, I saved no money, but in the harmonica's estimation I outdid myself at every note. And I play the guitar, too.

A VOICE FROM THE CORNER. A fool and foolish talk!

FEDIA. From a fool I hear that. [*A pause ensues.*]

NAZAROVNA. [*To SAVVA.*] You, old man, had better lie in the heat awhile and warm your foot a bit. [*A pause ensues.*] Sir! Man of God! [*She shakes SAVVA.*] Not going to die, are you?

FEDIA. You, grandfather, had better take a sip of vodka. It'll scorch your insides a bit as you drink, but it'll brace you up afterwards. Take a drink.

NAZAROVNA. Stop your jabbering, lad. The old man is perhaps giving up his soul to God and repenting of his sins, and you keep on like that—and with a harmonica. Stop that music, you impudent fellow!

FEDIA. And why don't you leave him in peace? He's not feeling well, and here are you keeping up an old woman's prattle. He's too good to say a rough word to you, and you, fool that you are, are only too glad that he listens to you. . . . Sleep, grandpa; pay no heed to her. Let her chatter—don't you care. An old woman's tongue is like the devil's broom; it'll sweep the wisest man out of the house. Don't you care! [*He clasps his hands.*] But you are skinny, brother! Awful! Just like a

dead skeleton—no vitality at all. Not dying, are you?

SAVVA. Why die? God forbid—just simply to die! I'll bear it a bit and then, with God's help, I'll be up again. The Holy Virgin won't let me expire in a strange land. I'll die at home.

FEDIA. Are you from far?

SAVVA. From the district of Vológda. From Vológda itself—I'm a citizen there.

FEDIA. And where is Vológda?

TIKHON. Beyond Moscow. It's a government.

FEDIA. Whew! How far you have wandered, greybeard! And all on foot?

SAVVA. On foot, my boy. I was at Tikhon beyond the Don and am now bound for the Holy Mountains. From there, by God's leave, I'll make for Odessa. Thence, they say, one can get to Jerusalem very cheaply—for some twenty-one rubles even.

FEDIA. And were you ever in Moscow?

SAVVA. I should say so! About five times.

FEDIA. A fine city? [*He lights his pipe.*] Worth seeing?

SAVVA. Many holy places, lad. It's always nice where holy things abound.

BORTSOV. [*He approaches the bar and TIKHON.*] Once more, I beg of you, serve a drink, for Christ's sake.

FEDIA. The main thing about a city is that it should be clean; to be sprinkled when dusty and cleaned when dirty; to have high buildings, a theatre, police, cabs that— I've lived in cities myself; I understand.

BORTSOV. Just a wine-glass—here this small one. It's only on trust. I'll pay you.

TIKHON. Yes, yes!

BORTSOV. I beg of you! Do a favor!

TIKHON. Go on.

BORTSOV. You don't comprehend me. Understand, you scamp, if your peasant blockhead contains any brains, that it isn't I that ask, but, putting it in your peasant language, my inside asks. My sickness craves! Understand!

TIKHON. There's nothing for us to understand. Get out!

BORTSOV. But if I don't have a drink right now—if I don't satisfy my craving, mind you—I'm likely to commit a crime. God knows what I may do! You have seen, fool, many drinking folk in your saloon life—don't you know yet what such people are? They are sick folk. Chain them, beat them, cut them up, if you will, but don't deny them vodka. Well, I humbly beg of you! Do a favor! I humiliate myself. My God, how I humiliate myself!

TIKHON. Up with the money; then there'll be vodka.

BORTSOV. But where am I to get money? Everything is gone for drink! Everything, to a thread! Then what can I give you? Only this overcoat is left; but I cannot give you that. . . . It's over a bare body. . . . Want the cap? [*He takes off his cap and hands it to TIKHON.*]

TIKHON. [*Examining the cap.*] Hm! . . . There are caps and caps. It's as full of holes as a sieve.

FEDIA. [*Laughing.*] A noble's! To wear in the street and to tip to ladies. "Hello! Good-bye! How do you do?"

TIKHON. [*Returning BORTSOV's cap.*] I wouldn't take it as a gift. It's a dunghill!

BORTSOV. You don't like it? Then trust me. I'll be passing here on my way back from town and bring you your five kopéks. May you choke with it.

Yes, choke! Let it stick right in your throat. [*He coughs.*] I hate you!

TIKHON. [*Pounding his fist on the counter.*] What do you want of me? Who are you, anyway? What kind of crook? What brought you here?

BORTSOV. I want a drink. Not I—exactly I, either; my sickness wants it. Understand!

TIKHON. Don't try my patience, or you'll be out on the steppe in a jiffy.

BORTSOV. What shall I do? [*Walking away from the bar.*] What shall I do? [*He meditates.*]

YEFIMOVNA. It's the evil one that's torturing you. Just snap your fingers at it, sir. The cursed thing whispers to you: "Drink! Drink!" But you answer: "I won't! I won't!" and it'll leave you alone.

FEDIA. Must have wheels in his head—hi-hi-hi! It's enough to turn one's stomach. [*Giggling.*] You're queer, sir. Go to sleep! It's no use hanging around like a scarecrow in the middle of the saloon. This is not an orchard.

BORTSOV. [*Viciously.*] Shut up! Nobody is asking you, you jackass!

FEDIA. You may talk and talk, but don't go too far. I have met your kind before. There are many such as you sauntering up and down the highway. And as for "jackass," I'll give you such a box on the ear that you will howl louder than the wind. You're a jackass yourself, you good-for-nothing! [*A pause ensues.*] Rascal!

NAZAROVNA. The old man is praying perhaps and giving up his soul to his Maker, and they, the blasphemers, keep on picking quarrels with each other—and what language! Shame on them!

FEDIA. And you, cabbage-stalk, should not grumble once you are in a saloon. In saloons there's saloon manners.

BORTSOV. But how can I? What shall I do? How make him understand? Is eloquence necessary? [*To TIKHON.*] The blood clots my heart. Uncle Tikhon! [*Weeping.*] *Uncle Tikhon!*

SAVVA. [*Groaning.*] I have a shooting in the leg as from a bullet of fire. . . . Pilgrim mother, *Mátushka!*

YEFIMOVNA. Well, *Cátyushka?*

SAVVA. Who is weeping?

YEFIMOVNA. The nobleman.

SAVVA. Ask the nobleman to shed a tear for me, that I may live to die at Vológda. A tearful prayer is more acceptable.

BORTSOV. I am not praying, sir. Nor are these tears; it's sap. The heart contracts and makes the sap run. [*He sits down at SAVVA's feet.*] Sap, this is! But how could you understand? It isn't for your dark mind, sir, to understand. You people are sitting in the darkness.

SAVVA. But are there any who have the light?

BORTSOV. There are such, grandpa. *They* would understand.

SAVVA. Indeed, there are, my friend. The saints had that light. They understood all suffering—understood it without your ever telling them anything, either. They just looked into one's eyes, and they had it. And what comfort their understanding brought one! It was as if you never had any woe—'twas gone as by a touch of the hand.

FEDIA. And have you ever seen saints?

SAVVA. Occasionally, my boy. There are many people of all kinds on earth. There are the sinners, and there are the servants of God.

BORTSOV. I don't understand this at all. Talk is addressed to the understanding, but have I any reason now? I have only feeling—thirst! [*He sud-*

denly walks up to the bar.] Tikhon, take the overcoat. Understand? [*About to take it off.*] The overcoat.

TIKHON. And underneath is what? [*He peeps under BORTSOV's overcoat.*] The bare body? No, don't remove it; I won't take it. I won't take sin upon my soul.

[MERIK enters.]

BORTSOV. Well, I take the sin on myself. All right?

MERIK. [*He quietly takes off his great-coat, remaining in a sheepskin jacket. In his belt is an axe.*] Some feel cold, while bears and those who forget their kin always feel hot. I'm perspiring! [*He puts the axe on the floor and removes his jacket.*] Before one drags a foot out of the mud he's in a pool of perspiration. You drag one foot out, and in goes the other.

YEFIMOVNA. That's so. . . . The rain hasn't slackened, has it, friend.

MERIK. [*Glancing at YEFIMOVNA.*] I don't talk with old women. [*A pause ensues.*]

BORTSOV. [*To TIKHON.*] I take the sin on myself. Do you hear or not?

TIKHON. I don't want to hear, either. Leave me alone!

MERIK. It's pitch-dark, as if someone had smeared the sky with tar. Not a soul is to be seen. And the rain keeps beating in one's face like a snow-storm. [*He takes his clothes and axe under his arm.*]

FEDIA. For such as you—thieves—that's just the thing. Beasts of prey lie in hiding, and for you, merry Andrews, it's a holiday.

MERIK. And from whom do I hear this?

FEDIA. Look and see. Not blind, are you?

MERIK. I'll make note of this. [*He walks up to* TIKHON.] Hello, big mug! Or don't you recognize me?

TIKHON. If one should remember all you drunkards who pass on the highway, it would add ten furrows to his forehead.

MERIK. Then, take a look. [*A pause ensues.*]

TIKHON. I have you already, what do you think of that! I recognized you by your optics. [*He holds out a hand.*] Andrei Polikarpov?

MERIK. I was Andrei Polikarpov, but now call me Yegor Merik.

TIKHON. Why so?

MERIK. Whatever passport it pleases the Lord to give me, by that name am I known. I've been Merik for about two months. [*Thunder roars.*] Te, te, te! Fire away! Who's afraid? [*He surveys the room.*] Any police spies here?

TIKHON. What spies? Mostly gnats and mosquitoes. A tame lot this is. The police must now be sound asleep in their featherbeds. [*Aloud.*] Say, *právoslávnyé*,* watch your pockets and clothes if you wouldn't be sorry. A crook! Might steal!

MERIK. Let 'em watch their cash, if they have any; but as for their clothes, I won't touch 'em. Nowhere to take 'em.

TIKHON. Where the deuce are you going?

MERIK. To Kuban.

TIKHON. Oho!

FEDIA. To Kuban? Upon your word? [*He rises.*] Fine places! It's such a region, friends, that you can't even dream of it though you should

* Another untranslatable term. It means, literally, "true believers," but is used by Russian peasants to express more the idea of comradeship—something like "countrymen"—than any religious connotation. The word, which is a pronominal adjective, is here used in the plural.—Translator.

sleep three years. Such profusion! They say the birds there, the game, the animals of all kinds, and—my God! Why, the grass grows there all year round, the people live like brothers, and they have more land than they know what to do with. The government, they say—a soldier told me the other day—grants one hundred *dessiatins** per head. That's happiness, by golly!

MERIK. Happiness. . . . Happiness follows behind one's back. It can't be seen. You'll not be happy sooner than you can bite your own elbow. It's all nonsense. [*He surveys the benches and the people.*] Looks like a prisoners' halting-place. What poverty!

YEFIMOVNA. [*To MERIK.*] Such fierce eyes! There's enmity in you, lad. Don't stare at us!

MERIK. Such poverty!

YEFIMOVNA. Turn away! [*She pushes SAVVA.*] Savva, dear, a wicked man is staring at us. It bodes no good, my dear. [*To MERIK.*] Turn away, I say, you serpent!

SAVVA. He won't touch you, *Matushka*, he won't. God won't permit it.

MERIK. What true believers! [*He shrugs his shoulders.*] So quiet! Why, you are not asleep, you bow-legged ones. Why do you keep quiet?

YEFIMOVNA. Turn away your eyes—turn away your devil's look!

MERIK. Shut up, you crooked old thing! It was not with the devil's look, but with kindness and good cheer, that I noticed your sad lot. You huddle up from the cold like flies; so I took pity on you and wanted to say a kind word—wanted to comfort you—and there you turn away your faces. Well? All

*A *dessiatina* is equal to a little more than 2½ acres.

right! [*He walks up to FEDIA.*] Where do you hail from?

FEDIA. From hereabouts; Khamonovsky Zavód—from the brick yards.

MERIK. Get up, sir.

FEDIA. [*Rising.*] Well?

MERIK. Up, up altogether. I'll lie down here.

FEDIA. Not your place, is it?

MERIK. It is. Go spread on the floor.

FEDIA. Pass on, wayfarer. I am not afraid of you.

MERIK. Saucy? Well, go and don't argue, or you'll cry, fool.

TIKHON. [*To FEDIA.*] Don't cross him, lad. Do as he says.

FEDIA. What right have you? You bulge out your pike eyes and think I'm afraid of you. [*He gathers up his belongings under his arm and proceeds to make his bed on the floor.*] Devil! [*He lies down and covers his head and all.*]

MERIK. [*Making his bed on the bench.*] Then you haven't seen the devil, if you call me one. Devils aren't like that. [*He lies down and places his axe beside him.*] Lie down, dear axe, comrade mine. Let me cover you, axie.

TIKHON. Where did you get that axe?

MERIK. Why, I stole it; stole it, and now must carry it about as a fool would some gaudy-colored bag: I hate to leave it behind and yet have nowhere to keep it—it's like a loathsome wife. . . . No, friend [*He covers himself*], devils aren't like that.

FEDIA. [*Poking his head out from under his great-coat.*] How, then?

MERIK. They are like vapor, spirit, like a puff of air [*Blowing*],—that's how they are. One can't see them.

A VOICE FROM THE CORNER. If he should sit under hedges, he might.

MERIK. I tried and didn't see. They lie, the old women and silly peasants. Neither the devil, nor the wood-nymph, nor the dead can be seen. The eye isn't made to see everything. When I was a lad I used to go to the woods at night in order to see the wood-nymph. I would yell and shout with all my might, calling the goddess of the forest and never winking an eye. Well, I imagined all sorts of queer things, but I saw no nymph. I would go to cemeteries at night to see ghosts, but the old women lie. I saw all kinds of beings, but as for that Awful One—I couldn't see him to save my life. We haven't the eye for it.

A VOICE FROM THE CORNER. Don't be so sure about that; sometimes one can see. A peasant in our village once killed a pig. He ripped his belly open when out leaped the—

SAVVA. [*Rising.*] Boys, don't be mentioning the Evil One. It's a sin, my friends.

MERIK. Ah, you greybeard! You skeleton! [*He laughs.*] We needn't visit cemeteries; our own dead creep out here from underground to read us sermons. A sin! It's not for those with your foolish ideas to read people lectures. You are a gloomy lot, steeped in ignorance. [*He lights his pipe.*] My father was a peasant and also liked to read us sermons. One night he stole a bag of apples from the parson. He brought it to us and said: "Boys, don't munch any apples before the great fast—it's a sin." You act the same way. The devil must not be mentioned, but it's all right to cuss. Take this hag here, for instance. [*He points to YEFIMOVNA.*] In me she saw a wicked man, and yet she herself, from

woman's folly, has yielded her soul to the devil some five times, no doubt.

YEFIMOVNA. Fie, fie, fie! Christ protect us! [*She covers her face with her hands.*] Savva, dear!

TIKHON. Why do you scare them? And glad! [*The wind slams the door.*] Jesus Christ, what a wind!

MERIK. [*Stretching.*] O, if one could but show his strength! [*The door slams again in the wind.*] Pit it against this wind here! It can't tear the door off its hinges, while I could, if it came to that, pull this tavern up by the roots. [*He rises and lies down.*] What a bore!

NAZAROVNA. Say your prayers, you heathen! Why are you restless?

YEFIMOVNA. Leave him alone, the plague take him! He is again staring at us. [*To MERIK.*] Don't stare, wicked man. What eyes! What eyes! Like the demon's before early mass.

SAVVA. Let him stare, pilgrim-mothers. Offer up a prayer and his eye will bring you no harm.

BORTSOV. No, I cannot—it's beyond my endurance! [*He walks over to the bar.*] Listen, Tikhon, I ask you the last time: half a glass!

TIKHON. [*He shakes his head.*] Money!

BORTSOV. My God, but haven't I told you already? Everything is gone for drink. Where shall I get you money? And will it ruin you to give me a drop of vodka on trust? A glass of vodka stands you but two kopéks, but for me it means deliverance from suffering. How I suffer! It's not caprice, but suffering! Understand?

TIKHON. Try it on somebody else. Go ask those *právoslávnyé* there—let them treat you for the sake of Christ, if they will—but I give only bread for Christ's sake.

BORTSOV. You can skin those paupers yourself, but I would rather be excused. It's not in me to rob them. Not in me! Understand? [*He pounds his fist on the bar.*] Not in me! [*A pause ensues.*] Hm . . . but wait. [*He turns to the pilgrims.*] And that's not a bad idea, either—*právoslávnyé*, won't you sacrifice five kopéks? It's the inside that begs. I'm sick!

FEDIA. Oh, you! "Sacrifice." Cheat! Isn't water good enough for you?

BORTSOV. But how I lower myself! My, how I humiliate myself! Never mind! I don't want anything—I was only joking.

MERIK. You won't move him, Boss. He's a noted miser. Wait, I must have a five-kopék piece somewhere. We'll have a glass together, half and half. [*He fumbles in his pockets.*] Got stuck somewhere, damn it! I thought I heard something jingling in the pocket recently. No, it's gone. Gone, friend. Such is your luck! [*A pause ensues.*]

BORTSOV. I can't go without a drink. I'll commit some crime—or else decide on suicide. What shall I do? My God! [*He looks to the door.*] Go away, perhaps? Go forth into this darkness, lead wherever chance may?

MERIK. Why don't you, dear pilgrims, read him sermons? And you, Tikhon, why don't you put him out? He hasn't paid for his night's lodging, you know. Kick him out; take him by the collar! Oh, how brutal people are nowadays! They have no sentiment or kindness. Fierce folk! A man is drowning, and they shout to him: "Drown faster. We haven't time to watch; this is our busy day." As for throwing him a rope, that's out of the question. Rope costs money!

SAVVA. Don't censure, kind man.

MERIK. Shut up, you old wolf! You are a cruel lot. Monsters! Soul-mongers! [*To TIKHON.*] Come over here and pull off my boots. Quick!

TIKHON. Ho, ho, what airs! [*He laughs.*] It's awful!

MERIK. Come on, I say. Quick! [*A pause ensues.*] Do you hear or not? What am I talking to? [*He rises.*]

TIKHON. Say, say, that'll do.

MERIK. I want you, bloodsucker, to pull the boots off me—me, a poor tramp.

TIKHON. Well, well, don't rage. Have a drink. Come have a glass.

MERIK. Folks, what am I asking? That he treat me to drinks or remove my boots? Have I expressed myself inaccurately? [*To TIKHON.*] You didn't hear me right, it seems. I'll wait a minute—perhaps you'll get me. [*There is considerable commotion among the pilgrims and others. They get up and stare at TIKHON and MERIK in silent suspense.*]

TIKHON. The evil one brought you! [*He comes out from behind the bar.*] What a lord we have here! Well, come on, then. [*He pulls off MERIK's boots.*] What a rogue!

MERIK. That's right. Place them alongside each other. That's it. Now go!

TIKHON. [*He returns behind the bar after removing the boots.*] But my, how you like to joke! Another one of your jokes here and out you go in a jiffy! Sure enough! [*To BORTSOV, who is approaching.*] You again?

BORTSOV. You see, I could give you some gold trinket. It's yours, if you want it.

TIKHON. Why do you stutter? Talk like a man.

BORTSOV. Though it is very mean on my part, what else can I do? Being dead broke, I bring my-

self over to this meanness. Even a court would acquit me. Take it but on condition that you return it to me later when I come back from town. I hand it to you before witnesses. Ladies and gentlemen, you be the witnesses! [*He takes from his bosom a golden locket.*] Here it is. I ought to remove the picture, but I've no place to keep it; I'm all wet. Well, grab it—picture and all. Only remember: your fingers must not touch this face! I beg of you. I was rude to you, dear sir, and foolish, but you will pardon me and not touch it with your fingers. Don't let your eyes rest on this face. [*He hands TIKHON the locket.*]

TIKHON. [*Examining the locket.*] A stolen little watch. . . . Well, all right, drink. [*He pours out a glass.*] Drink till you burst!

BORTSOV. But don't let your fingers touch it. [*He drinks slowly and spasmodically.*]

TIKHON. [*Opening the locket.*] Hm, a lady! Where did you get such a one?

MERIK. Let's see it. [*He gets up and walks over to the bar.*] Let's have a look.

TIKHON. [*Pushing MERIK's hand away.*] Stand back! See it in my hand.

FEDIA. [*He gets up and goes to TIKHON.*] Let me see it, too.

[*From all sides pilgrims and others approach the bar, forming a crowd.*]

MERIK. [*With both his hands he tightly holds TIKHON's hand with the locket and silently eyes the picture. A pause ensues.*] A handsome little devil. From the nobility.

FEDIA. Yes, from the nobility. What cheeks! What eyes! Get your hand out of the way; I can't see. Hair down to the waist. Just as if alive! Was about to speak. [*There is silence.*]

MEBIK. For a weak man this is the greatest curse. Once such a woman gets astride a fellow, he [*Waving his hand in despair*]*—he's done for.* [*The voice of KUZMA is heard. "Ho! Ho, you fowl!"*]

KUZMA. [*Entering.*] The tavern standing on the way tempts the traveller by night and day. One may pass his own father in broad daylight without noticing him, but a tavern can be seen in the dark a hundred versts away. To one side, all ye who believe in God! Well. [*He knocks a five kopék piece on the bar.*] A glass of real Madiera! Quick!

FEDIA. O, you reckless devil!

TIKHON. Don't swing your arms; you'll knock this out of my hand.

KUZMA. That's what God intended them for, to be swung. She's all melted, the sweetmeat,—your aunt, the chicken. Scared by the rain, the tender-foot! [*He drinks.*]

YEFIMOVNA. Who wouldn't be afraid, my good man, to be out on the road in such a night as this? Now, thank God, there are plenty of villages and farms along the way where one may find shelter from the elements, but formerly it was something terrible. You could go a hundred versts and not only come upon no farms or villages, but not see a chip of wood. You had to sleep on the ground.

KUZMA. And how long, old woman, have you been knocking about in the world?

YEFIMOVNA. Going on eighty, *Cátyushká.*

KUZMA. Going on eighty! Why, you'll soon be as old as a crow. [*He looks at BORTSOV.*] And what sort of bird is this? [*He eyes BORTSOV closely.*] A nobleman!

[*BORTSOV recognizes KUZMA and, blushing, goes off to the corner and sits down on the bench.*]

KUZMA. Semion Sergeévitch! Is that you or not? Hey! How come you to be in this tavern? Is this the place for you?

BORTSOV. Hush!

MERIK. [*To KUZMA.*] Who is that?

KUZMA. An unfortunate sufferer. [*He nervously walks about by the bar.*] Ah! In a saloon! What do you think of that? In rags! Drunk! I am shocked, friends, shocked! [*He talks in a half-whisper to MERIK.*] This is our master—our landlord, Semion Sergeévitch Bortsov. Did you notice his condition? Doesn't look much like a man, does he? Thus does drinking—Another glass! [*He drinks.*] I come from his village, from Bortsóvka—maybe you've heard of it—two hundred versts from here, in the district of Yegórov. We were his father's serfs—"Tis a pity!

MERIK. Was he rich?

KUZMA. Very.

MERIK. Squandered his father's wealth?

KUZMA. No; ill luck, my friend. He was a fine gentleman—rich and temperate. [*To ТИХОН.*] You may have seen him pass this tavern on his way to town. Fine, spirited horses and a carriage on springs—first class! He kept fifteen horses, my friend. About five years ago he was crossing the Mikishkin Ferry here, I remember, and instead of five kopéks he tossed a ruble. "No time," says he, "to wait for change." What do you think of that?

MERIK. He must have been out of his mind.

KUZMA. He acted like one in his senses. It all came from being chicken-hearted—from too much riches. To begin with, boys, there was a woman in the case. He fell in love, that good man, with a city-bred girl and imagined her the most beautiful woman in the whole world. The crow fell in love worse than

a falcon. Comes from a respectable family, she does; not a loose woman or anything like that, but simply a flirt. Just went about twisting and twirling and making eyes all the time. Always laughing and smiling—no brains at all. The nobility like that; they think her clever. Our peasant way would be simply to chase her out of the house. Well, she returned his love, and the nobleman's fate was sealed. He commenced to take her out and all that—treat her to teas and sweetmeats, all-night rowing and piano-playing.

BORTSOV. Don't tell, Kuzma. Why should you? What have they to do with my life?

KUZMA. Beg pardon, your honor. I just told the least bit—a mere trifle—and that'll do for them. Just a bit, because I was shocked—very much shocked, I was. Another glass, there! [*He drinks.*]

MERIK. [*In a half-whisper.*] And did she love him?

KUZMA. [*In a half-whisper which gradually rises to regular speech.*] How could she fail to love him? He's no insignificant nobleman. Who wouldn't fall in love when there are a thousand *dessiatins* and money to burn? He himself was a man of parts, dignified and temperate, hobnobbing with every government official, like you and me here, shaking their hands [*He takes MERIK by the hand*—"hello" and "good-bye" and "by your leave." Well, one night I was passing through the noble's park, a park, friend, five versts long. I was walking quietly. I looked around and there were they sitting on a bench [*He imitates a kiss*] kissing each other—he her once and she, the serpent, him twice. He takes her snow-white hand in his, and she's all aglow, hugging him and hugging him, the devil take her. "I love you, Senia," says she. And Senia, like one

dazed, from sheer good nature, goes about from place to place bragging about his happiness. He gives one a ruble, another two; gives me money to buy a horse. Exempts all his debtors for joy!

BORISOV. But, why be telling about it? These people have no sympathy. It's torture!

KUZMA. Only a trifle, sir. They're inquiring, and why not tell a bit? But if it makes you angry, then I won't, that's all. I don't give a hang for them.

[*The postman's bells are heard.*]

FEDIA. Don't holler; talk low.

KUZMA. I'm talking low as it is. He won't have it, and that's all there is to it. And there's nothing more to tell, anyhow. They got married—that's all. Nothing more to it. Fill another glass, there, for Kuzma, the temperate. [*He drinks.*] I don't like drunkenness! After the wedding, just as people were about to have supper, what should she do but run away in a cab! [*In a whisper.*] To the city to a lawyer, her lover! How's that? What do you think of her? At that very moment, mind you. Killing her wouldn't be enough!

MERIK. [*Thinking.*] Yes; and then what?

KUZMA. Lost his reason. As you see, he started out to kill a fly and now, I hear, he's up against the bumble-bee.* Those were flies, but now it's bumble-bees! And he still loves her; you can see that he does. He must now be going to the city on foot to glance at her. He'll have a look and return.

[*The mail-coach arrives at the tavern. The postman enters and drinks.*]

TIKHON. The mail is late today.

*A Russian proverb whose meaning must be gathered from the context.

[*The postman silently pays and goes out. The mail-coach, with bells tinkling, leaves.*]

A VOICE FROM THE CORNER. In such weather to rob the mail would be a cinch!

MERIK. I have lived thirty-five years in the world and never once robbed the mail. [*A pause ensues.*] Now it's gone—too late! Too late!

KUZMA. Want a taste of Siberia?

MERIK. Some rob and don't taste it. And even if Siberia! [*Bluntly.*] What next?

KUZMA. You refer to the unfortunate one?

MERIK. Whom else could I mean?

KUZMA. The next question, friends, how came his ruin? A brother-in-law, his sister's husband. He took a notion to guarantee a loan of some thirty thousand rubles made by this man from a banking house. That brother-in-law is a grafter; he knows his business, the rascal—no flies on him, I tell you. He took the money, and as for paying it back—why, what's the use? And so our man just had to come across with that thirty thousand! [*He sighs.*] Foolish fellow, and it's his own foolishness that he is paying for. His wife had children by that lawyer, and his brother-in-law bought an estate near Poltava, while this here fellow goes about the saloons and, like a fool, complains to us, peasants: "I've lost all faith, my friends. I have no one, that is, to pin my faith to." Chicken-heartedness! Everyone has his troubles. The serpent gnaws at the heart, hence men take to drink. Take, for instance, the head of our *vólost*.* His wife brings a man teacher to the house in broad daylight, spending on drink the money of her husband, while he just walks about and smiles. Grub a bit thinner, that's all.

TIKHON. [*Sighing.*] It's all according to the strength God's given one.

*A rural district.

KUZMA. That does vary, it is true. . . . Well, what's coming to you? [*He pays.*] Take the bloody money! Good-bye, boys. Good night, sleep tight! I must run; I'm late. I'm bringing a midwife from the hospital to a lady. She must have grown tired waiting, the good-natured thing, and wet to the skin. [*He hurries out.*]

TIKHON. [*After a pause.*] Hey, there! What's your name? Unhappy man, come have a drink. [*He fills a glass.*]

BORTSOV. [*He approaches the bar hesitatingly and drinks.*] It means I now owe you for two drinks?

TIKHON. O, never mind. Drink, that's all. Drown your woes in sorrow.

FEDIA. Have one on me, boss. Alas! [*He throws a five-kopék piece on the bar.*] One dies if he drinks, and dies if he doesn't. It's all right without drink, but with it, by Jove, is pleasanter. Even sorrows grow lighter with drink. Drink away!

BORSTOV. Whew! It's hot!

MERIK. Let's have it. [*He takes the locket from TIKHON and studies the picture.*] Hm! Ran off after the wedding, eh? Is that the kind you are?

A VOICE FROM THE CORNER. Fill another glass, Tisha. Let him have one on me, too.

MERIK. [*Dashing the locket to the floor.*] Damn you! [*He walks quickly to his place and lies down with his face to the wall. A commotion follows.*]

BORSTOV. What's this? What do you call that? [*He picks up the locket.*] How dare you, brute! What right have you! [*Wailing.*] D'you want me to kill you, do you? Peasant! Ruffian!

TIKHON. It's enough to rage, boss. It's not made of glass; it didn't break. Have another drink and go to bed. [*He fills a glass.*] I lingered too long to

listen to you fellows; it was time to close up long ago. [*He goes and locks the outside door.*]

BORTSOV. [*Drinks.*] How dared he? And such a fool, too! [*To MERIK.*] Understand? You are a fool—an ass!

SAVVA. Friends! Honorable gentlemen! Give your tongues a rest. What's the good of noise? Let people sleep.

TIKHON. Lie down, lie down. Enough of that! [*He goes behind the bar and locks the drawer containing the day's receipts.*] It's time to sleep.

FEDIA. I should say it is! [*He lies down.*] Good night, folks.

MERIK. [*He get up and spreads his sheepskin coat on the bench.*] Here, boss, lie down.

TIKHON. And where will you sleep?

MERIK. Anywhere; even on the floor. [*He spreads his great-coat on the floor.*] It's all the same to me. [*He places his axe beside him.*] For him it's a hardship to sleep on the floor. He's used to fine linen and cotton mattresses.

TIKHON. [*To BORTSOV.*] Lie down, sir. It's enough to stare at the picture. [*He blows out the candle.*] Be done with her!

BORTSOV. [*Tottering.*] Where am I to lie down?

TIKHON. On the tramp's place. Didn't you hear him give it to you?

BORTSOV. [*He approaches the above-mentioned place.*] I'm—rather drunk. Is this it? Here am I to sleep, eh?

TIKHON. Here, here; lie down, don't fear. [*He stretches himself on the bar.*]

BORTSOV. [*Lying down.*] I—am—drunk. All about is. [*He opens the locket.*] Got a light? [*A pause ensues.*] You, Masha, are a queer little woman. You look at me from the frame there and

smile. [*He laughs.*] Drunk! But is it fair to laugh at a fellow who's drunk? You overlook this, as *Stchastlivtoev** would say, and fall in love with a drunkard.

FEDIA. How the wind howls! It's terrible!

BORTSOV. [*He laughs.*] You're funny! How can you spin like that? No one can catch up with you.

MERIK. He's raving—bewitched by the picture. [*He laughs.*] Here's a curious situation! Learned men have invented all kinds of machines and medicines, but no wise man has yet found an antidote for the female sex. They study how to cure every disease, but it never even occurs to them that more people perish through women than from disease. Sly, mercenary, ungracious creatures, with no brains at all! Mothers-in-law intriguing against their daughters-in-law, the latter trying to blacken their husbands, and so on without end.

TIKHON. The women have pulled his ears and now his hair's on end.

MERIK. I am not the only one. From the beginning of time, ever since the world was created, people have been complaining. It's not for nothing that in stories and songs woman and the devil are linked together. Not for nothing! It's true, even if only half true. [*A pause follows.*] That noble there is making a fool of himself. It wasn't from too big a head, either, that I left my parents and went tramping.

FEDIA. Women?

MERIK. Like that nobleman, I, too, walked about like one under a spell, boasting of my happiness, day and night like a man in a fever. But the time came

*An obscure reference inexplicable by anything in the play. The word itself is a proper masculine noun derived from the Russian for "happiness."—Translator.

and I opened my eyes. It wasn't love—just deceit!

FEDIA. What did you do to her?

MERIK. None of your business. [*A pause ensues.*] Killed her, you think? I didn't have the courage. I not only spared her, but pitied her besides.—Live and be happy! Only keep out of my sight, and may I forget you, you venomous snake?

[*A knock is heard at the door.*]

TIKHON. Who the devil's this? Who's there? [*The knocking continues.*] Who's knocking? [*He gets up and goes to the door.*] Who's knocking? Pass on your way; we're locked up!

A VOICE FROM BEHIND THE DOOR. Let me in, Tikhon; do a favor! A spring's broken in the carriage. Help a fellow out; be a friend in need. If we could only fasten it with some rope, we might get there somehow.

TIKHON. Who are you driving?

A VOICE FROM BEHIND THE DOOR. A lady going from the city to Varsónsfievo. Only five versts farther. Help one out!

TIKHON. Go tell the lady that if she'll pay ten rubles we'll get a rope and fix up that spring.

A VOICE FROM BEHIND THE DOOR. What! Are you crazy? Ten rubles! You mad dog! Exulting in people's misfortunes?

TIKHON. Just as you like. If you don't want to, very well.

A VOICE FROM BEHIND THE DOOR. Well, all right; wait a while. [*A pause follows.*] The lady says it's all right.

TIKHON. Come in! [*He opens the door and admits the driver.*]

THE DRIVER. Hello, *právoslávnyé!* Well, fetch the rope! Quick! Boys, who'll lend a hand? There'll be tips.

TIKHON. Oh, what's the use tipping? Let them sleep. We two can manage it ourselves.

THE DRIVER. Whew, how tired I am! The cold and the mud—not a dry spot anywhere! Another thing, friend: Haven't you a room here for the lady to get warm? The carriage has tilted so that there is no sitting up in it.

TIKHON. A room! What ever put that into her head? Let her thaw out here if she is frozen; we'll find a place. [*He goes to BORTSOV and dusts off a place near him.*] Get up, get up! Lie on the floor an hour or so while a lady gets warm. [*To BORTSOV.*] Rise, sir! Sit up awhile. [*BORTSOV rises.*] Here's a place for you.

[*The driver goes out.*]

FEDIA. Here's a fine guest for you; the devil sent her! Now there'll be no sleeping again before day-break.

TIKHON. Sorry I didn't ask fifteen! She'd pay. [*He stops before the door in an expectant attitude.*] You people don't be so rough. Don't use such language.

[*MARIA YEGOROVNA enters, followed by the driver.*]

TIKHON. [*Bowing.*] Welcome, your highness! Ours is but a peasant's hut—a rat-hole. Don't scorn it.

MARIA YEGOROVNA. I can't see a thing here. Where am I to go?

TIKHON. This way, your highness. [*He leads her to the place by BORTSOV.*] Here, please. [*He blows away the dust.*] I have no private room; I'm sorry. But, Madam, have no fear; these are good, quiet people.

MARIA YEGOROVNA. [*Sitting down beside BORTSOV.*] My, how terribly close it is here! Open the door at least!

TIKHON. All right, madam. [*He runs over and opens the door.*]

MERIK. People are freezing here and they throw the door wide open! [*He gets up and slams the door shut.*] What a boss you are! [*He lies down.*]

TIKHON. I beg your pardon, your highness. That's our jester; he's a little off. But don't fear, he won't touch you. Only—excuse me, madam—I can't take ten rubles. Fifteen, if you please.

MARIA YEGOROVNA. All right, only be quick about it.

TIKHON. This minute. We'll have it fixed in a twinkling. [*He pulls a rope from under the bar.*] This very minute.

[*A pause follows.*]

BORTSOV. [*Gazing at MARIA YEGOROVNA.*] Mary! Masha!

MARIA YEGOROVNA. [*Looking at BORTSOV.*] What now, I wonder?

BORTSOV. Mary, is this you? Where do you come from?

[*MARIA YEGOROVNA, having recognized BORTSOV, shrieks and bounds off to the centre of the tavern.*]

BORTSOV. [*Following her.*] Maria, it's I! [*He giggles.*] My wife! Maria! And where am I? A light, folks!

MARIA YEGOROVNA. Go away! You lie—it isn't you. It's impossible! [*She covers her face with her hands.*] It's a lie—a joke!

BORTSOV. The voice, the gait! Maria, it's I! I'll soon—get sober. My head swims. My God! Wait, wait—I don't understand anything. [*He shouts.*] My wife! [*He drops by her feet weeping.*]

[*A group gathers around the couple.*]

MARIA YEGOROVNA. Stand back. [*To the driver.*] Dennis, let's start. I can't stay here any longer.

MERIK. [*He jumps up and stares at her face.*] The picture! [*He grabs her by the hand.*] That's her! Hey, folks, it's the noble's wife!

MARIA YEGOROVNA. Get away, fool! [*She tries to free her arm.*] Dennis, why do you look on? [*DENNIS and TIKHON run up to her and take MERIK by the arms.*] This is a murderer's den! Let go my hand! I'm not afraid. Be off with you!

MERIK. Wait, I'll let go soon. Let me say just a word to you, one word, that you may understand—wait. [*He turns to TIKHON and DENNIS.*] Away with you, blockheads; don't hold me! I won't let go before I have said that word. Wait—just a second. [*He strikes his forehead with his fist.*] No! God has denied me the wisdom; I can't hit upon a word for you!

MARIA YEGOROVNA. [*Freeing her hand.*] Get away with you! Drunkards! Dennis, we are off! [*She starts for the door.*]

MERIK. [*Blocking her way.*] Well, just glance at him with but one eye! Caress him with but a single word of love! I beg of you, in the name of God.

MARIA YEGOROVNA. Take this madman away from me!

MERIK. Then perish, you damned thing! [*He swings his axe. A terrible commotion ensues. Everyone jumps up with noise and shrieks of horror. SAVVA gets between MERIK and MARIA YEGOROVNA. DENNIS forcibly pushes MERIK aside and carries the lady out of the tavern. Then everyone stands as though stunned. A long pause follows.*]

BORTSOV. [*Beating the air with his hands.*] Maria! Where are you, Maria?

NAZAROVNA. My God, my God! You have broken my heart, you murderers! Oh, what a cursed night!

MERIK. [*Dropping his arm that holds the axe.*]
Have I finished her or not?

TIKHON. Thank God, your head is safe.

MERIK. Then I didn't kill her! [*He walks unsteadily to his bed.*] It's not my fate to meet death through a stolen axe. [*He drops on his bed and weeps.*] How sad! How terribly sad! Pity me, *právoslávnye!*

[CURTAIN]

NOTE.—The history of this play is this: *On the Highway* was written as early as 1884, but was forbidden by Russian censorship and almost lost. When Chekhov's literary executors were gathering material for a posthumous volume published in 1914, the censor's copy of the play was discovered by mere chance, its existence not having been suspected even by the author's intimate literary friends. The manuscript still bore the official disapprobation—"Found unfit for presentation. September 20, 1885." This translation has been made from the posthumous volume aforementioned (edited by Chekhov's wife and published at Moscow).—D. A. M.

RECENT MAGAZINE ARTICLES ON THE DRAMA.

PUBLISHED PLAYS AND SPECIAL ARTICLES:

- My Remembrances** (serial), by E. H. Sothorn; Scribner's, January.
- A Note on Paul Hervieu**, by Brander Matthews; Bookman, January.
- Editorial note on Clyde Fitch**; Bookman, January.
- The Life of Charles Frohman** (serial), by Daniel Frohman and Isaac F. Marcossou; Cosmopolitan, January.
- Serge Diaghileff**; Current Opinion, January.
- The Synthesis of Movement and Music in a Possible New Art of the Theatre**; Current Opinion, January.
- Children of the Sunrise***, a drama in two scenes, by Julia P. Dabney; Poet Lore, Midwinter Number.
- Strindberg, Reality and the Dream Play**, by Mabel Holmes Parsons; Poet Lore, Midwinter Number.
- Shakspere—the Man of Wisdom: Our National Celebration in His Honor**, by Mary Fanton Roberts; The Craftsman, January.
- What Is to Become of the Theatre?** by Robert Anderson; Illustrated World, January.
- Why Wheels Turn Backwards in the Movies**; Illustrated World, January.
- A Democratic Imperial Ballet**, by Cornelia S. Penfield; Harper's Weekly, January 1st.
- Internationalism in the German Theatre of Today—New Stage Perils**; Literary Digest, January 15th.
- Aims of the Russian Ballet**; Literary Digest, January 29th.
- Hamlet à la mode***; Literary Digest, January 29th.
- Prince Igor***, by H. K. Moderwell; The New Republic, January 15th.
- The Word "Untented" in *King Lear***, by S. A. Tannenbaum, M.D.; The Dial, January 20th.
- Ada Rehan**; Outlook, January 9th.
- Stephen Phillips**, by Edith Wyatt; North American Review, February.

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- The Long Run in the Theatre, by Clayton Hamilton; Bookman, February.
- How Yvette Guilbert Converts Old Songs into Poignant Dramas; Current Opinion, February.
- The Russian Ballet, by James Huneker; Everybody's, February.
- The Life of Charles Frohman (serial), by Daniel Frohman and Isaac F. Marcossou; Cosmopolitan, February.
- Movies Anywhere, by Albert Murchison; Illustrated World, February.
- Movies and Efficiency, by L. A. Nelson; Illustrated World, February.
- Great Acting, by Walter Pritchard Eaton; American, February.
- The First Careless Rapture over Shakespeare (editorial); The Dial, February 2nd.
- Mr. Masfield in America; The Dial, February 2nd.
- Baconian Antics.—Coriolanus' Slip of Memory, by S. A. Tannenbaum, M.D.; The Dial, February 17th.
- The Russian Ballet, by James Huneker; Puck, February 5th.
- The Russian Ballet and the Police Force; Harper's Weekly, February 12th.
- Cohan and *Macbeth*: A Study in Methods; Harper's Weekly, February 26th.
- The Neighborhood Playhouse; The Nation, February 10th.
- Ballet According to Bakst; The New Republic, February 5th.
- Plato, Dante and Bernard Shaw, by Harold Goddard; The New Republic, February 12th.
- Masfield Again in America; Literary Digest, February 5th.
- One Whom "Shakespeare Foresaw"; Literary Digest, February 5th.
- Yvette Guilbert; Literary Digest, February 12th.
- Shaw on the Munition Maker; Literary Digest, February 19th.
- Too Much New York in Our Drama; Literary Digest, February 26th.
- The Shakespeare Tercentenary (editorial); Bookman, March.

- Scenic Settings in America, by Clayton Hamilton; Bookman, March.
- George Bernard Shaw: Musician, by Florence Boylston Pelo; Bookman, March.
- In Retrospect of the Ballet Russe; Current Opinion, March.
- Conflict of Opinion on the Greatness of Hauptmann; Current Opinion, March.
- The Life of Charles Frohman (serial), by Daniel Frohman and Isaac F. Marcossan; Cosmopolitan, March.
- The Black Magic of the Movie Screen (silhouetting), by Charles W. Person; Illustrated World, March.
- Wanted—Moving Picture Authors, by Walter Pritchard Eaton; American, March.
- Puppet Plays for Children, by Inis Weed; Century, March.
- A Testimonial to Mr. William Winter, by E. F. C.; The Theatre, March.
- New York Sees the Russian Ballet; The Theatre, March.
- Memories of Salvini, by Robert Underwood Johnson; The Theatre, March.
- American versus English Actors, by Alan Dale; The Theatre, March.
- The One-Act Play, by Clayton E. Gibbs; The Theatre, March.
- Is Stage Emotion Real? by Jane Cowl; The Theatre, March.
- The Russian Ballet, by Charles Zwaska; Little Review, March.
- Mr. Masefield as a Dramatist, by H. G. Montillon; The Dial, March 2nd.
- The Case Against "Shakspeare," by S. A. Tannenbaum; The Dial, March 2nd.
- Editorial on William Winter; The Dial, March 30th.
- The Shakespearean Tercentenaries of 1916 and 1864, by Emily F. Brown; The Dial, March 30th.
- Movie-proof: The Drama Speaks; Harper's Weekly, March 11th.
- The Coming Revolution in Scenic Art, by Wilfred Buckland; Harper's Weekly, March 25th.
- How Not to Read Shakespeare (editorial); Outlook, March 29th.

Our Humble Dramatic Origins; *Literary Digest*, March 11th.

A Theatre's Right to Bar a Critic; *Literary Digest*, March 18th.

REVIEWS OF PRODUCTIONS:

Seen on the Stage (reviews of current productions in New York City), by Clayton Hamilton; *Vogue*, January 1st.

Seen on the Stage; *Vogue*, January 15th.

Major Barbara, by Lawrence Gilman; *North American Review*, January.

Stevenson on the Stage (*Treasure Island*), by Clayton Hamilton; *Bookman*, January.

Hobson's Choice; *Current Opinion*, January.

The Weavers; *Harper's Weekly*, January 1st.

Peter Pan, and brief mention of others; *Harper's Weekly*, January 8th.

Notes on Current Productions in New York City; *Harper's Weekly*, January 15th.

Bunny; *Harper's Weekly*, January 22nd.

Erstwhile Susan, and the Bandbox Bill; *Harper's Weekly*, January 29th.

The Great Lover, by James Huneker; *Puck*, January 1st.

Major Barbara, by James Huneker; *Puck*, January 15th.

Current Productions, by Metcalfe; *Life*, January 6th.

Current Productions; *Life*, January 20th.

Current Productions; *Life*, January 27th.

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Grotesques, and *Overtones*; *Poetry*, January.

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The Great Lover, and *Treasure Island*; Current Opinion, February.
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The Fear Market; The Nation, February 3rd.
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**REVIEWS OF THE PRINTED PLAY AND BOOKS
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- Is There a Shakespearean Problem?** (G. G. Greenwood);
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- Life of Shakespeare** (Sidney Lee); Contemporary Review,
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- Life of Shakespeare** (Sidney Lee), and **The Real Oscar
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uary 13th.
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uary 6th.
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- The Pathos of Proximity**, by Alexander S. Kaun (rev. of
the Ravenna Edition of Oscar Wilde's Works); The
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- John M. Synge: A Few Personal Recollections** (John
Masefield); The Dial, March 6th.

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THE

DRAMA

A QUARTERLY REVIEW



Feodor Sologub as a Dramatist

By John Cournos

THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH

A Complete Play, by Feodor Sologub

The Popular Drama of Japan

By Gertrude Emerson

Kriegsgefangenensendung

By Leigh Henry

The Selective Process and the Star

By Anne Higginson Spicer

Actors to Unionize

By Chester G. Calder

Kakitsuhata

A Noh Play by Motokiyo, from the notes
of Ernest Fenollosa, edited by Ezra Pound

The Choric School

By John Rodker

Paganism in Popular Plays

By Edgar White Burrill

The Printed Play—Brief Reviews

Recent Magazine Articles on the Drama

AUG.

No. 23 1916

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THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

August, 1916

THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

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THE DRAMA

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FEODOR SOLOGUB AS A DRAMATIST.



FEODOR SOLOGUB, whose real name is Feodor Kuzmich Teternikov, is, at the age of fifty-three, the author of twenty bulky volumes. Best known as a novelist—whose *Little Demon*, first published only nine years ago, is already considered a classic—he has actually mastered every medium he has tried. He is hardly less famous for his short stories, which are a curious blend of Chekhov and Poe; his poems are as exquisite as any in Russian and are distinguished for their seductive word music—it has been said of his translations of Verlaine that the French poet could not have bettered them had he been a Russian; even his little tales, fables, fairy tales and poems in prose, some of them no more than a few lines, are famous for their irony, their penetration into human character, their criticism of life. And it is but natural that an author of such manifold genius should not escape the fascination of the theatre—not the foot-lights, mind you, but the theatre; the theatre in the old sense, as a place of mystery, and a religious temple, to which men flock to purge themselves of their everydayness, to do homage to the priest-poet

and to his holiness which they have come to share. "Of everything once created by the genius of man," says Sologub, "perhaps the lightest on the visible surface and the most terrible in its apprehensible depth is the creation of the theatre."

Luckily, Sologub has written an essay on the theatre. He begins it with the words just quoted and he goes on to expound in very clear language his fascinating theory. This essay, which is called *The Theatre of One Will*, is prefaced with Dostoievsky's words: "I philosophise like a poet."

Before, however, I go into Sologub's theories of a creative theatre I think I cannot do better for the sake of those readers who have not read this author than to explain his general attitude towards art and life and the relation that he sees between the two. For it is a curious thing, and the thing which proves Sologub's genius, that the contents of all his twenty volumes radiate, as it were, and converge towards a single point. As he himself says in his foreword to his play, *The Triumph of Death*, "By means of all the words he can find he calls unwearyingly to one and the same thing." Again, he makes the poet Trirodov, of *The Created Legend*, say: "A man's whole life is barely enough to think out a single idea properly. . . . If people should but grasp this fact human knowledge would take an unprecedented step forward."

Life, as Sologub conceives it, belongs to the two Moiras, Aisa and Ananke. Aisa is the goddess of chance and chaos, "the prodigal scatterer of episodes." This capricious goddess directs the miserable destinies of most men, who make no efforts at all or very feeble ones against her whims. That is life; that is reality. There are, however, the few daring ones who, under no circumstances, are willing to

accept the conditions imposed upon them by life. Like Ivan Karamazov in Dostoievsky's *Brothers Karamazov*, they may say: "I do not accept God, I do not accept the world created by him, God's world; I simply return Him the ticket most respectfully." It is true this philosophy does not offer complete consolation. Still, it is with some such definite decision that one enters the kingdom of Ananke, the goddess of Necessity. It is usually people of imagination and creative will who belong to this kingdom. They sort out the beautiful from the ugly, the dream from the nightmare, the orderly from the chaotic. For themselves at least they create a new life. This, too, is reality; a greater reality than the other; the reality of the imagination—firm and bounding in outline—which William Blake, among the English poets, was never tired of preaching. Episodes thrown in a man's way, however thorny and obstructive, cannot thwart the possessor of this attribute; he will scale everything, bend everything to his purpose. It is this that makes the artist, and this power belongs not alone to the artist in words, stone and pigment, but also to the artist in life. We have seen the contrast drawn by Sologub in *The Little Demon* in the persons of Peredonov and Lindmilla. Peredonov was petty and pitiful, a "little demon": "He strove towards the truth in common with all conscious life, and this striving tormented him. He himself did not understand that he, like all men, was striving towards the truth, and that was why he had that confused unrest. He could not find his truth, and he became entangled, and was perishing." On the other hand, Lindmilla had saved herself from the pettiness and provinciality of this "unclean, impotent earth" by being conscious of the existent beauty, from which she created a new world for herself. She

disentangled her "legend" from life; she knew her particular truth.

And having created in *The Little Demon* his "Inferno" out of the sordid realities of our life, Sologub found it necessary, as it were, to react from his morose creation and to write his "Paradiso," which he calls the *Created Legend*. He strikes the keynote of the book in the opening paragraph: "I take a piece of life, coarse and poor, and create from it a delightful legend—because I am a poet. Whether it linger in the darkness; whether it be dim, commonplace, or raging with a furious fire—life is before you; I, a poet, will erect the legend I have created about the enchanting and the beautiful."

II.

If all this gives a more or less clear idea of Sologub's attitude towards life, it also gives more than a suggestion of his demands of art. Art arises out of the concept of this eternal clash between the ugly and the beautiful, and for that reason also all great art aspires towards the tragic; it is the tragic hero trying to pass from the kingdom of chance and chaos into the kingdom of necessity and orderliness, the kingdom of Ananke; his progress is repeatedly intercepted by all sorts of conditions and circumstances, and when the struggle, with all the elements of the unknown, becomes unequal, too great for him, he still asserts his own will, which leads sacrificially to the tragic climax, inevitable destruction. Tragedy therefore, affirms Sologub, is seldom lyricism, and always irony. The tragic hero is himself the sacrifice and the sacrificer. His actions are always noble and infect others with nobility, even when they are wrong, for they can only come from a great rebellious, uncompromising soul willing to give his all for

an idea, for his beloved, yielding his own to no one, neither to God nor to man, flouting the fates, defying the furies. Every character in a tragedy is there only to serve as an additional ray of light focused on the hero, whose one will directs the whole action of the play. There should be no useless characters in a tragedy, and they only vary in their relative importance for approaching "the One Face." "Desdemona is not so significant in the tragic situation because she has a great and touching role, not because Othello loved her and destroyed her, but because she was the fated one whose hand had removed his mask and uncovered even to him the fatal deceit and ambiguity of the world. . . ."

And just as there is in tragedy this insistence upon the affirmation of the poet's will through the hero, so everything in a genuine comedy is left to chance and whim; in this sense, comedy resembles life, and is, with all its prodigality of confused incident, an affirmation of the kingdom of Aisa. Even here the will of the poet may assert itself, as it does assert itself in the Shakespearean fool, behind whose laughing mask there peers the tragic face of the author, and in whose diverting remarks and jovial lyrics one with a keen ear may detect wisdom and pathos. And we today, with our supersensitiveness, and with none of the joviality of the Elizabethans, quite naturally see in Shylock a tragic and not a comic figure.

Play—spectacle—mystery: that is the inevitable progression, says Sologub in his essay. "We played when we were children—and our hearts have died for light play, and we have come in curiosity to see the spectacle, and the hour will come when, in the transcendence of body and spirit, we shall come together in liturgical ceremony, in sacramental rites. . . ."

At present the theatre is only a spectacle, and unfortunately cannot yet be anything else but a spectacle. Everything in it is constructed only for a spectacle. There are the professional actors, the footlights and the curtains, the cunningly painted decorations, which aspire to give an illusion of reality, the clever artifices and all the conventional devices of the realistic theatre. Here, too, the hare-brained Aisa reigns. For the theatre is divided among the actor, the manager, the decorator and the playwright. The theatre will become a liturgy and a mystery only when the will of the poet shall reign. Art can become the great consoler only when it is removed from the realm of strange and ridiculous chance occurrences and is transported into the kingdom of necessity and freedom, that of Ananke, who crushes the temptations of life, and becomes "the eternal consoler," not a false, fickle one like Life, but an ever-faithful one.

III.

The first step towards overcoming this sorry spectacle of a dismembered will and disjointed action and towards the establishment of unity and the will of the poet is to put the performing actor in his place. The performing actor, argues Sologub, attracts the spectator's attention too much to himself, and obscures the drama and the author. The more talented an actor, the more unendurable is his tyranny to the author, the more damaging his performance to the tragedy. And as a remedy to this seductive and unwholesome tyranny Sologub suggests that the centre of the theatrical presentation be transferred either to the spectator in the pit, or to the author behind the scenes.

The initial acknowledgment of the theatre as a

religious temple would be the abolition of the foot-lights and perhaps the curtain in order to create an intimacy—there is Sologub's frequently employed phrase, "the intimate theatre" to describe this—whereby the spectator becomes a participator and even a creator in the presentation. Instead of the trite decorations there might be simply four adorned walls, or the outer expanse of the street, a city square or a field. The spectacle would thus be transformed into a masquerade, a kind of combination of play and spectacle. In this way the people might meet in the soul of the poet. As Sologub puts it: "All the meridians meet at one pole (or two, if you like—but according to the law of the identity of polar oppositions it is sufficient to speak of one pole), all the earthly roads lead inevitably to one eternal Rome—I am everything and in everything, only I, there is no one else, there never was and there never will be. . . . The pathos of mystery finds its nourishment in the accidental multitude becoming transformed into an inevitable unity." The many separate beings thus meet in happy concord by their individual egos, merging in the transcendent ego of the poet, the only will-possessed person in the tragedy who directs its unity of action, place and time.

Moreover, this single being who directs the tragedy is not only significant in that he directs the choral action, but also in that he is a symbol of the inevitable; he is not merely a tragic hero but an image of destiny. How absurd, then, in the opinion of Sologub, is the simple-minded dramatist's idea that "there are all sorts of people and that everyone has his own special character."

He (the dramatist) goes to various places, observes the furnishings, the realistic details and the manners, and makes a very life-like representation of all this. Kozmo-

demdansky and Nalimov and Veksel will recognize themselves and their neckties, and rejoice if the author—out of friendship—has flattered them; or be angry if the author has given them to understand that their appearance and their habits are displeasing to him. The theatre manager rejoices that he has the necessary material in stock for the staging of the piece. The actor rejoices because it gives him such a splendid opportunity to show his powers, and he mimics the appearance and ways of the painter X, the poet Y, the engineer A, the lawyer B. The public is enthralled—it recognizes its acquaintances and its non-acquaintances, and feels itself at an undoubted advantage: whatsoever small and rather common transgressions are dragged out upon the stage, each spectator, except the small number depicted, clearly sees that it is not he who is portrayed but someone else.

And all this is unnecessary. There is no reality and no manners—there is only the eternal active mystery. There are no stories and no intrigues, all the plots have long since been used, all the ends have long since been foretold—and there is only the eternal liturgy. What are all words and dialogues? There is only one eternal dialogue, and he who asks answers himself, and thirsts for an answer. And what are the themes? Only Love, only Death.

There are no different people—there is only one man, only I alone in the whole universe, exercising my will, active, suffering, consuming myself in an unquenchable flame, finding deliverance from the fury of a terrible amorphous life only in the cooling and consoling embrace of the eternal consoler—Death.

And the poet, recreating the world according to his new design, may, at his pleasure, unite lovers or part them, lift up his hero or cast him down into an abyss of despair and destruction. He may crown beauty, youth, faithfulness, boldness, mad daring, self-denial—but “nothing can prevent him from exalting ugliness and from placing the betrayer Judas above the other Apostles.”

This is how Sologub would have a theatrical performance:

There is the author or the reader who takes his place—better the reader, who, dispassionate and calm, will not be agitated like the author by timidity before the auditors, who may shout at him in praise or in censure (one and the other are equally unpleasant). The reader sits near the scene, somewhere at the side. A table is before him; on the table is the play, which will be shown presently. The reader begins in order, from the beginning:

He reads the name of the play. The name of the author.

The motto of the play if there is one. For instance, the motto to Gogol's *Revisor*: "Don't blame the mirror if your face is crooked."—National proverb. The motto is rude—such was its author—but just, and useful for the establishment of a requisite bond between the spectator and the action on the stage.

Then the reading of the *Dramatis Personae*.

Foreword or remarks of the author, if they exist.

First Act. Scenario. The naming of the persons on the scene. Exits and the entrances of the actors as they are designed in the text of the play.

All the scenarios, not omitting even the slightest, if only a single word.

And in the degree as the reader near the scene reads, the curtain rises, and the scenario described by the author becomes revealed and lit up; the actors come upon the scene and do what the author's directions tell them to do, and they go on to say all that is in the text of the drama. . . .

And the action reveals itself before the spectator just as it reveals itself in life; we walk about and we talk, apparently according to our will; we do what we must do or what occurs to us to do, and we try as it were to realize our wishes, in so far as the laws of nature or the wishes of other people do not hinder us. . . . And usually we do not know that our every movement and our every word have been prompted and even foreseen in the demoniacal creative plan for universal play, once and for all; so that actually there is no choice and no freedom left to us. . . . and the world we know is nothing other than a decoration beautiful to see, and behind it—behind the scene—there is slovenliness and filth.

Can the theatre bring us any other spectacle than that given us by a world too broad for our strength and too bounded for our will? And should it? Play as you live;

bring life on the stage—is it not this which even the realistic theatre desires?

And to the actor's grievance that this plan would reduce him to a marionette Sologub responds with the question: "Why indeed should not the actor be like a marionette? People are not offended at being marionettes. It is the immutable law of universal play that men should be like wonderfully constructed marionettes. And he cannot escape or even forget it."

In other words, if "All the world's a stage," it is also true that the stage is the world, and that within its unities of time, space and action—that is, within the prescribed limitations of art, prescribed only in the sense that its outer lines are "firm and bounding" and permit no digression and confusion but only concentration, the quintessence of things—there must be presented a true and all-embracing image of the world. And in discovering the author—the creator—behind this wonderful mask, the spectator will have discovered something of himself, he indeed having been created in his creator's image, and his own possibilities now being revealed to him in this picture of the author's soul. He sees himself for the first time drawn up to his full height, and he begins to perceive the infinite wisdom that lies behind Emerson's remark: "Man is but dwarf of himself."

In such a theatre there should be no laughter, no applause, "no tears to be dried with a handkerchief held by nervous fingers." And just as there is but one will in the play, that of the author, who directs the action through the one actor—the tragic hero—so there should be but one spectator, like that mad king who, alone in his magnificent theatre, had the habit of hiding himself behind the heavy hangings,

in the dark and silence of his royal couch, and of listening to the play of the actors "as in a golden dream." The spectator must at least assume that attitude—as though he were only a mouse which had its home in the theatre.

And there can be no objection to decoration on the scene, provided it is suited to the mood of the play by its external suggestions which do not divert the spectator's attention from the author's mask. For that reason it would be better perhaps, suggests Sologub, if the whole play should be given with a uniform decoration, and that every detail should be austere drawn, so that there should be absolutely nothing superfluous, nothing beyond what is absolutely necessary. The same should apply to the lighting. The spectator might be shown what he ought to see at a given moment, and all the rest lost in darkness—"as even on the threshold of our consciousness there sometimes fall things visible to us, yet to which we pay no attention. They exist, yet it is as if they did not exist. . . . They repose in the world of possibilities and only wait for their turn to be."

"The theatre gravitates toward tragedy, and in the end must become tragic." Sologub goes on to develop this theory at length, and to show how it falls in with modern psychology. I can do nothing better than to quote his most trenchant remarks:

Every farce as it is played nowadays becomes a tragedy, our laughter sounds to our sensitive ears more terrible than our weeping, and our great joy is accompanied by hysterics. In the old days the gay and the healthy laughed. Conquerors laughed. Nowadays the sad and the mad laugh. Gogol laughs. . . . And my madness has gay eyes.

Our comedy, to put it simply, is nothing else but amusing and diverting tragedy. But tragedy also rouses our laughter.

The sufferings of young Werther? No—the sufferings of a sensitive schoolboy. It is all very ridiculous and also very serious. He might have been birched—but he had shot himself. Little girls crowd round his dugout grave, roses fall on his coffin—they had wished to give him a birching, but did not manage to do it in time. That was not their fault.

There is “the vacillant laughter,” which pours out around us, rhythmically—like music. It needs dancing. For

is it Death alone that dances on fresh graves? We too can dance. We are a terrible, gay people—we dance like a family of undertakers in the year of the cholera. . . .

And so whatever be the content of future tragedy, Sologub foresees dancing as an integral part of it—choral dancing—and that is why the footlights need to be taken down. And here he pauses to pay tribute to Isadora Duncan, who “gave wings to her feet with her dance,” and who, to paraphrase the poet Brussov, gives us comfort in the knowledge that there is another life with us. It is not for nothing, observes Sologub rather ironically, that perspicacious dramatists have already introduced into their plays the cake-walk, the matschiche, and other such nonsense.

With the eye of a great artist, Sologub reduces life to an esthetic phenomenon, a legend, a decoration, One Face, a mask, apparently tranquil on the surface, but suggesting infinite depths of experience and pain. He would have the drama a thing without excess of grimace and gesture—for art is not violence. “The actor,” he says, “should be cold and calm, his every word should sound even and deep, his every movement should be slow and beautiful.” At the same time there should be “a calm reproduction of picture after picture,” and the fewer pictures

the more clearly will the tragic design stand out before the enchanted auditor. And he enjoins us that it should never remind us of the rapid glimmer of the kinematograph.

IV.

The Triumph of Death is perhaps the best of Sologub's plays. It was acted a few years ago at the Kommisarzhnevsky Theatre in Moscow; unfortunately I cannot say whether it was performed in the manner outlined by the author in his brilliant essay, a manner to which it is preeminently fitted. It is not a realistic play, and the characters in it are more or less abstractioned—let us say, Love, Beauty and Death. Sologub reiterates here the idea he has expressed more than once elsewhere, an idea which he conceived by his early and unceasing admiration of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. He takes the story of Aldonza, transformed by the gallant Don Quixote into Dulcinea, as a symbol of the poet's mission in the world: the discernment of beauty, wherever and under whatsoever guise it may be found. And here he develops a philosophic theory, that beauty does not achieve perfection but is always in the making, and a given element of it is therefore always a creative force, forever seeking realization, forever discontented, forever trying to find a lover, a poet, or a king to crown her.

In this play we find Malgista (Dulcinea) sending out her wise and beautiful young daughter Algista (Aldonza) to a great deed, that of deposing ugliness, symbolized in the person of Queen Bertha, and usurping the throne for herself, Algista, that is Beauty, until now the Queen's maid-servant. The argument of the play is clearly and beautifully worked out in the Prologue. The peasant girl

Aldonza enters upon the scene, bearing across her young shoulders a yoke with two pails, of living and of dead water, which, if sprinkled on the world, might create a new and beautiful life. But people don't understand this: they regard the sweet water of beauty as bitter and harsh, fit only for washing floors with—just as they do not acknowledge beauty herself as the supreme thing in life and subject her to a secondary role, that of a servant. The king refuses to crown her, the poet to sing her praises—the latter indeed pays more attention to the lady who is a mere chance acquaintance, a fellow traveller; they call her Aldonza, and refuse to recognize her as Dulcinea. On the other hand, the mere amulet she presents to the king, causes him to exclaim after he has put it on his neck: "Everything around me seems as if it were becoming light and free. What a light, light life! What a light, light death! And everything before me is becoming like a sweet dream. A golden dream." But all her magic and charms fail to win over the king and the poet and the young lover, Page Dagobert, and as they sit down on the stairs of the proud castle, in a trance, to watch the eternal play, Dulcinea exclaims:

"Again the spectacle will remain a spectacle, and not become a mystery. Again the true beauty of this world, of the enchantress Dulcinea in the form of the serpent-eyed Aldonza shall remain uncrowned, unsung, unloved."

Nevertheless, she vows she will never give up her eternal design, and will strive unwearyingly to win over the poet, the lover and the king. "Only I am alive in life and in death, only within me is life, only to me the ultimate triumph." One cannot avoid the reflection that these spectators are as blind as those critics of *The Little Demon* who could see only slime

and filth in it and were too obtuse to see that it was a criticism of life. There can be no better retort than this play.

As a pendant to *The Triumph of Death*, you have Sologub's tragedy, *The Gift of the Wise Bees*, based on a story from Greek mythology. It might easily have been called "The Triumph of Love," or for that matter, also "The Triumph of Death." The story is of Laodameia, the wife of King Protesilaus—the first to fall before the walls of Troy in the great war of the Greeks for Helen. With all the force of her unquenchable love and her unconsolable sorrow, she entreats Persephone and Hermes to grant her husband permission to leave the kingdom of death for a short space. Protesilaus comes and the few blissful hours granted by Hermes pass, until Hermes takes him back forever. Laodameia's father, Acastus, angered by his daughter's refusal to marry Protagoras, throws into the fire the statue of Protesilaus, Laodameia's sole consolation, cunningly fashioned by the young sculptor, Lissipus, from the "gift of the wise bees." But together with the wax of the statue melts also Laodameia's life, and she goes to join him whom she loved so passionately, into the silent kingdom of Hermes.

And the interesting thing about this play is that in spite of its Greek theme, and to a large extent its observances of the form of ancient tragedy, it remains essentially modern, and essentially Sologubian, in that it reveals the author's own soul, in the hope, as he says somewhere, "that the intimate part of me shall become the universal."

But Sologub has also written realistic plays. Putting aside his dramatization of *The Little Demon*, his most successful play is *Hostages of Life*. Even here the realism is only external; actually it is a

thoroughly symbolist play. It presents the same fundamental idea, the eternal antagonism of Dream and Reality, of Art and Life, of Dulcinea and Aldonza. The creative basis of life is given in the image of Mikhail, who dreams of constructing a new, happy and free life, and bridges, roads and high towers, such as not yet have been built. Katya is the realistic basis of life—earthly life—which has captivated Mikhail; life beautiful and alluring, which he loves best of all, in spite of her weakness, treachery and infidelity. Sukhov is the conservative basis (especially evident in his children), growing callous in his one and eternal principle, “thus it has been, thus it shall be,” creating nothing, only holding on to what he has accumulated; to be sure, he loves Katya, but all his thoughts and feelings are organically antagonistic to the breed of Mikhail and Lilith. Lilith is a shy lunar reverie, the idealistic basis of life, loving Mikhail in his creative impulse, who gets closer to him in the years of lonely striving, of breaking with life, and efforts at mastery of Actuality by Art and Dream. A quiet lunar enchantress, she comes to him in the hours of loneliness and sadness, after he has been forsaken by the traitress Life, and having achieved her purpose, goes away, “in deathly weariness,” far away, to new deeds not yet crowned with success. . . .

And so after all, in spite of the absolutely realistic appearance of the play, the theme remains the same; it is again the story of Dulcinea—unrecognized and uncrowned Beauty—and people, like Katya and Mikhail, are shown to be only poor prisoners, mere “hostages of life.” The hour of their triumph will come, but it will be only a partial triumph, earthly and merely over themselves, over their own individual lives, and that is why weariness and sadness sound

in their triumph. For at best one must deny in order to affirm, even as in the case of Ivan Karamazov.

And so from the first page of his works to the last we truly find Sologub "calling unwearyingly" towards one and the same thing by means "of the charms of words obedient to him." And indeed no writer in Russia knows the magic of words more than he.

JOHN COURNOS.

THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH

A Tragedy in Three Acts, with a Prologue.

By FEODOR SOLOGUB.

Authorized Translation from the Russian

by John Cournos.

FOREWORD.

The author of the tragedy has changed his mask for a half mask, but does not yet reveal his face. He wishes to be recognized by his smile, curling at the corners of his lips.

But if he should not be recognized . . .

By means of all the words he can find he speaks of one and the same thing. Towards one and the same thing he calls unwearyingly. . . .

But if he should not be heard. . . .

Are not his poems beautiful? Is not his prose fragrant? Is he not the master of the charms of words obedient to him?

He smiles, and passes by, wrapped in a dark mantle.

And she is with him—she, the serpent-eyed.

THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH

The serpent-eyed in the proud chamber.

Prologue to the Tragedy

PERSONS OF THE PROLOGUE

THE KING.

ALDONZA, known as Queen Ortruda.

DULCINEA, known as Aldonza.

DAGOBERT, a page.

A POET in a frock-coat.

A LADY in a silk gown.

A corridor in the royal castle. The walls are constructed of huge, roughly-hewn stones. In the front wall there is the big arch of the entrance, through which the corridor is visible to the spectators. A broad, rather steep staircase descends to the pit, which corresponds to the inner courtyard; about half way up these stairs there is a small landing, narrower stairways on either side of which lead right and left, round the side walls towards the castle's inner courtyards. Massive columns are to be seen in the depth as well as on the sides of the corridor. Three low staircases in the corridor lead upward; the broad middle one leads into the banqueting hall; of the side narrow ones the one on the right leads into the royal bedchamber. A part of the stairway is lit up by the moon. The KING is seated on the stairs. He is looking searchingly into the darkness of the unlighted

courtyard, and speaking quietly, as if conversing with some unseen person.

THE KING. I do not know who calls me, and I cannot understand what he can want. Dark phantom, what do you desire from me? Your voice is inaudible, and your face is dark, as though it were covered with a mask of mist. I do not know why I have come here, into this dark place so full of midnight fears. Some portending, broad-winged bird has awakened me, and I came from my bedchamber, where on a couch I left my lovely spouse yielding herself to sweet sleep. And here I am, and it seems to me that there is a multitude of invisible faces before me. It is as if the courtyard of my ancestral castle has become filled with them, and from all the windows and balconies the pale shadows of those long since dead are looking at me. They listen—and are silent. They look upon me—and they tell me nothing. How terribly indifferent, how agonizingly impassive are these visitors!

[DULCINEA ascends the side stairs. She has the appearance of a poor peasant girl, and everyone here calls her ALDONZA. She is dressed in poor, ragged clothes; her hair is half loose, her arms are bare, and her feet are naked. She carries across her shoulders a yoke with two pails.]

DULCINEA. How tired I am! Oh God, how tired I am! They compel me to go to the spring of dead and living water, and when I bring back full pails, they tell me that the water is not fit to drink. They compel me to wash floors with it, while they beat me because I bring them bitter, sourish water. They do not know that I bring them full pails of sweet water. And I am tired. [She places the pails on the lower stairs. Then she sits down on the stairs, near

the KING, and for a long time looks silently into his face. At last she says, quietly:] Are you not the King who lives in this proud castle and who rules over this dark land?

KING. Yes, serpent-eyed one, I am the King of this land, but my land is radiant. [*He looks searchingly at her, and says:]* I recognize you. You are the peasant girl, Aldonza, the same one who makes the street boys laugh because some madman has called you by the sweet name of Dulcinea, the dear enchantress, the most lovely of all the maidens upon the earth. You have learned to enchant and to weave spells, serpent-eyed one, and yet you have not found yourself a bridegroom.

DULCINEA. I am waiting for a king and a poet who will crown me. They will crown beauty, and depose ugliness. They will reject the commonplace, and will strive to achieve the unattainable.

KING. Your pails are standing empty, those who sent you are waiting for water, and they will beat you if you tarry on the way. Pick up your pails, hang them on the yoke over your young smooth shoulders, go for the water, serve zealously him who has hired you for a pittance.

DULCINEA. For a pittance!

KING. Your slavish labors are not worth solid ringing gold. The coarse embrace of your master's son in a dark house passage, where it smells of the goat and the dog—that is your fitting reward. You've learnt to weave spells—but what use is there in your magic!

DULCINEA. The poet is coming this way, and together with him you must crown me, Dulcinea.

KING. Go after your water.

DULCINEA. So that, King, is your will! Once more you send me away. How weary I am! I shall

obey you, and bring living water and dead water. And now, King, accept this small gift from me.

[*She gives him an amulet, and walks away with the pails on the yoke.*]

KING. What did she give me—the sorceress? Are there evil spells in this amulet? Or is it something blissful? I'll put it on my neck. [*He puts the amulet on his neck.*] Everything about me seems to be becoming light and free. What a light, light life! What a light, light death! And everything before me is becoming like a sweet dream, a golden dream.

[*He lets his head droop.* DAGOBERT, the page, enters.]

DAGOBERT. The King has been bewitched by the serpent glance of Aldonza, and is asleep on the stairs. Queen Ortruda is alone. Fate is propitious to me.

[*He walks quietly into the royal bedchamber.* The POET and a LADY enter.]

POET. We struck a very good cabby.

LADY. Yes, he drove very quickly. The wind roared in my ears, and my heart was in a faint. But he was very strange. He sat like one dead. Mr. Poet, where did he bring us? Everything here is quiet, dark and still.

POET. It's a small tavern. But the drive certainly pleased me. In the poem which I shall write about this drive, I shall speak of a *troika*.*

LADY. If I were in your place, Mr. Poet, I should call it an automobile.

POET. No, my dear madam, better a *troika*. And I've found very good rhymes for the word.

LADY. What are they, Mr. Poet?

POET. Charodeika (sorceress) and vodka.

*A team of three horses abreast.

LADY. They are very good rhymes, Mr. Poet. But I like the first one better.

POET. The word automobile hasn't such good rhymes.

LADY. Perhaps it has.

POET. What rhyme?

A DISPASSIONATE VOICE. Death.

LADY. Did you hear?

POET. Yes, I heard. Someone has hidden himself and is joking.

LADY. Someone is sitting on the stairs.

POET. That's the porter.

LADY. Mr. Poet, you are nearsighted. Look well—it's the King.

POET. My dear madam, you are mistaken; kings don't sit on stairways.

LADY. Perhaps you are right, Mr. Poet. But it is very depressing here: I am afraid.

POET. We'll have some wine, and a morsel to eat. [*Turning into the space towards the pit, he calls:*] Waiter! [*They wait, looking into the darkness.*]

LADY. How dark it is here!

POET. That's all right. The electric light will be turned on presently. Waiter!

[*DULCINEA enters, bending under the weight of her yoke.*]

POET. My dear girl, will you wait on us here? Bring us the card.

DULCINEA. I have brought full pails of living and dead water.

POET. They have their own jargon in this inn. It means red and white wine. My dear madam, which will you have?

LADY. I prefer the white.

POET. It is evidently called dead water here. My

dear girl, pour us out some dead water. [DULCINEA walks up to them. She makes a scoop with a ladle, and hands it to the poet. The latter draws back.] Surely the wine isn't brought in pails here! Surely one doesn't drink from a ladle.

LADY. It seems to me rather original.

POET. It seems to me rather detestable.

LADY. You are right, Mr. Poet, original, but detestable. We shan't drink this dirty water from these filthy pails, out of this rusty ladle.

DULCINEA. You are mistaken, my dear. It is living and dead water, and you ought to drink of it. You would see yourself in a magic mirror.

LADY. [*Capriciously.*] I don't want to.

DULCINEA. Mr. Poet, I have waited a long time for you. You have come here, in the depth of time . . .

POET. [*To the LADY.*] This tavern is called "In the Depth of Time."

DULCINEA. [*Continuing.*] . . . in order to sing in praise of me, the loveliest of earthly maidens, the enchantress Dulcinea, who in this dark land is called improperly Aldonza.

POET. I did not come here for that.

DULCINEA. Sing my praises, Mr. Poet, and then the king shall crown me. Sing my praises, dear poet, and then a young man shall love me. Sing my praises, dear, handsome poet, and then my real name shall become revealed to all.

POET. You are a pretender. The real Dulcinea lives in the proud castle. She does not bear heavy pails. On her feet are velvet shoes strung with pearls.

DULCINEA. Mr. Poet, look into my eyes, and compose verses to me.

POET. I fear your eyes, serpent-eyed one. I have

already published all my verses, and I haven't any new ones.

DULCINEA. Nevertheless, Mr. Poet, you will not escape my charms. And this stranger cannot help you. Sit down on the stairs, and see what will happen here.

POET. I feel a strange fatigue. Let us sit down here, my dear madam; this strange girl is promising us a spectacle.

DULCINEA. It depends upon you whether it shall be merely a spectacle or whether it shall become a mystery.

POET. She is speaking of the intimate theatre. We shall see.

[The KING continues to sleep in the middle of the stairway. The POET and his LADY sit down near the column at the right. They lean against one another, and look at the spectacle as at a golden dream.]

DULCINEA. The king is sleeping heavily and he does not want to crown me. The poet is leaning wearily on the stairs of the castle and is sitting shoulder to shoulder with his chance fellow traveler and does not want to sing my praises, and will not recognize Dulcinea. I will invoke the young and the beautiful. I will exalt the delicious secrets of love to a high felicity. *[DULCINEA turns her face towards the royal bedroom and calls:]* Aldonza, you who are called Queen Ortruda! And you too, young page Dagobert! Come to me.

[At the top of the stairs appear QUEEN ORTRUDA and page DAGOBERT.]

DAGOBERT. My sweet lady Ortruda, why have you come out here? The King, bewitched by the serpent eyes of the maid Aldonza, would have slept a long time and not hindered our enjoyment of our delicious love.

ORTRUDA. Someone has called me; it is an imperious call.

DAGOBERT. And she is here, the serpent-eyed!

DULCINEA. Dear Dagobert, don't you know whom you love?

DAGOBERT. I love Queen Ortruda. And she loves me.

DULCINEA. Can't you see that she is Aldonza? Her eyes are dull, and her voice over-loud. Love me, dear boy, me, the beautiful Dulcinea. Reject the queen, give her to her husband.

ORTRUDA. She is mad. Don't listen to her, Dagobert.

DULCINEA. Be silent!

[*The QUEEN silently leans back on the stairs near the KING, and with a bewitched glance looks at the spectacle.*]

DULCINEA. Love me, dear Dagobert.

DAGOBERT. You are beautiful, sweet Aldonza. And you know how to bewitch. Here on the stairs sit they who have been bewitched by you. And will you bewitch me also, cunning Aldonza?

DULCINEA. Don't call me Aldonza. I am Dulcinea.

DAGOBERT. Everyone knows that you are Aldonza. But it is all the same to me. I'll call you what you like. I have nothing to lose by that.

[*He embraces DULCINEA and wants to kiss her. DULCINEA draws back. She speaks quietly.*]

DULCINEA. And you too do not believe me. And the most terrible mockery for me is that you will call me by a name that belongs to me, but in which you do not believe. I do not want such love. Go back to your love.

[*DAGOBERT sits down at ORTRUDA's side, embraces her and sleeps on her shoulder.*]

DULCINEA. Again the spectacle will remain a

spectacle, and not become a mystery. Again the true beauty of this world, of the enchantress Dulcinea in the form of the serpent-eyed Aldonza shall remain uncrowned, unsung, unloved. Great is my weariness, and great my sadness. But I will not give up my design. Tireless, I will strive in order that beauty shall be crowned, and ugliness deposed. Unwearyingly I shall appear in various forms to the poet, the lover, and the king. Sing my praises—I will say—fall in love with me, crown me. Come to me, follow me. Only I am alive in life and in death, only within me is life, only to me the ultimate triumph. I will now take the form of the slave Malgista, and I will send my daughter Algista to a great deed, to the fulfilment of my eternal design. To her virginal freshness I will add my eternal witchery. Whether the triumph be life's, or the triumph be death's, the triumph shall be mine.

THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH

A TRAGEDY

in three acts.

PERSONS OF THE PLAY

KING KHLODOVEG.

BERTHA, his wife.

ALGISTA, her maid servant.

MALGISTA, Algista's mother.

ETHELBERT, Bertha's brother.

LINGARD, a page.

Knights, ladies, pages, servants and maids.

THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH

ACT I.

[The hall is dimly illuminated with torches, placed in iron rings on the columns. From the door of the banqueting hall are heard the loud voices, songs and laughter of the banqueters, and the sound of tankards.]

SONG. *[In the banqueting hall.]*

There is strong wine in the cup,
'Tis bitter, bitter, bitter!
The Queen is under a veil,
Keen-eyed behind a cloud.
There is a fold in her veil
For the King to draw aside;
To kiss his wife's lips he'll find
'Tis sweet, 'tis sweet, 'tis sweet.

[ALGISTA and MALGISTA stand near the entrance of the dining hall, hiding behind a column. ALGISTA has covered her face with a veil. They speak in low tones.]

MALGISTA. Algista, my daughter, you are not afraid?

ALGISTA. I am not afraid.

MALGISTA. The time has come to carry out our great project—to crown beauty and to depose ugliness.

ALGISTA. Ugly and evil, stupid and greedy, a daughter worthy of many generations of cruel and crafty people, she is gay and rejoicing. She wants to be a queen—for what reason?

MALGISTA. No, not Bertha the lame, the daughter of the blood-thirsty King Koloman, but you, beautiful Algista, are worthy of being a queen.

ALGISTA. I shall be a queen. And there shall be no Algista; the name Algista shall be forgotten—and I shall be the queen.

MALGISTA. Perhaps it is for the last time that I call you my daughter. Let me then kiss once more the face of my Algista, the rose-red lips of my daughter. To-morrow I shall bend low before you, like a slave before her mistress.

[ALGISTA quickly throws off her veil. Her mother admires her and kisses her handsome face. ALGISTA covers her face again.]

ALGISTA. I stood here for a long time alone, hiding in a dark corner behind the columns. Here, before me, after the wedding ceremony, the knights who conducted Bertha bade goodby to the King. They have taken their leave, and driven away, and now only we two remain with her. Then I saw how the king of this place, and Bertha, and the guests went into that hall and took their seats at the table. They are sitting there and feasting, and I stand here alone and look on. From where I stand I can see the king's face, and Bertha beside the king.

MALGISTA. Our mistress Bertha, following the ancient custom, is sitting there covered by a levantine veil, embroidered with gold.

ALGISTA. Let Bertha cover herself with her gold-embroidered veil as much as she likes—I know, I remember her freckled face; I know that one of my mistress's legs is shorter than the other, and that she conceals it with cleverly made heels.

MALGISTA. [She laughs quietly and whispers.] The masters have devised many pompous ceremonies in order to magnify themselves before us. Their van-

ity is sometimes to our advantage. King Khlodoveg has not yet seen the face of our mistress.

ALGISTA. I know. They wished to deceive the king of this place. He would have found out in the morning. But then it would have been too late. You cannot banish the sharer of your couch, even though she be repugnant.

MALGISTA. No. We will give him a wife who is both beautiful and wise. He is drunk with wine. He will not see her face in the darkness of the bed-chamber, and later he will fail to understand how he has been duped and by whom.

ALGISTA. It was not we who began the cunning deception. Our crowned and powerful lords have opened the way to deception and cunning.

MALGISTA. The feast is coming to an end. I am going. It is better that I should not be seen with you.

[*She hurriedly kisses ALGISTA, and goes. The page LINGARD comes out of the dining hall.*]

LINGARD. I am tired. If only to sit down on the floor! To be on one's feet since morning is no easy matter. [*He goes to the corner where ALGISTA is.*] Who is here? Who are you?

ALGISTA. [*In a false, dull voice.*] I am Algista, Queen Bertha's maid.

LINGARD. What are you doing there in the dark? Why don't you have a good time with the other girls? They are all drunk. Or are you also tired? Let's rest; we'll keep each other company.

[*He embraces ALGISTA and tries to kiss her.*]

ALGISTA. Go away, or I'll cry out.

LINGARD. Oh, you touch-me-not! Am I so repulsive?

ALGISTA. You are beautiful, but to-night is not the time for us to kiss. And we must not. They are soon to leave the table, and I shall have to undress

our mistress Bertha, and to extinguish the flames in the royal bedchamber, so that the king may not look upon, before the proper time, what he should not.

LINGARD. What should he not look upon?

ALGISTA. It would be bad if the young husband should see before the proper time the freckled face of the queen. He would chase her away. He would say: "Go while you are still a maid."

[She laughs in falsetto.]

LINGARD. So Bertha is freckled, you say?

ALGISTA. Like a cuckoo. And lame too.

LINGARD. *[Laughing.]* So the King has been fooled?

ALGISTA. Yes. But say nothing just yet.

[She walks away, pretending to limp.]

LINGARD. But why have you covered yourself? And aren't you too a bit lame? The maid is like the mistress!

ALGISTA. What are you saying! I've never been lame.

[She leans against the wall.]

LINGARD. Let me see for myself. Perhaps you are freckled too!

[He catches hold of her veil. ALGISTA cries out with piercing loudness.]

LINGARD. Silly fool, you'll get us into trouble.

[He runs away. The KING comes out of the hall, followed by BERTHA, the knights, the ladies, the pages, the men servants and the maids.]

KING. Someone here called for help. Who has dared to disturb our radiant and joyous feast? The insolent one must be found and made to appear before us.

[ALGISTA mixes with the crowd of royal maids. The pages and the men servants run along the corridor with discordant noises and exclamations. The

knights stand in warlike and somewhat ridiculous attitudes, sternly rolling their eyes; their faces are red from wine drunk in plenty.]

KING. Are you frightened, my beloved Bertha? Are you trembling?

BERTHA. No, my lord; at your side I am afraid of nothing.

KING. Someone intoxicated by drink has raised an outcry, and, frightened at his own insolence, has hidden himself. Because of our great joy we will forgive the insolent one. Our faithful servants, cease your searching. The women will now conduct the queen to our chamber.

[BERTHA, the ladies and the maids go into the bedchamber, and ALGISTA with them.]

KING. As for us, my friends, let us return to the table and drink the last cup.

[The KING, knights, the page and men servants go into the dining room. The ladies who conducted the queen into the bedchamber return and make their exit by the side staircase on the left. The corridor is becoming empty. Loud outcries, ribald songs and drunken laughter come from the dining hall. MALGISTA cautiously ascends the side staircase. She looks around, as she stealthily makes her way to the doors of the royal bedchamber. She stops to listen. Then she quickly walks away, hiding behind the columns. The maids come out of the bedchamber. They are laughing, and speaking in drunken voices.]

THE MAID SERVANTS. "How modest she is! She didn't want to undress before us."

"She would let only her young maid remain there."

"And she, too, is strange. She has covered herself with a veil, and is silent."

"The old Malgista has whispered to me on the quiet that her daughter is freckled."

"And lame too, and that is why she wears shoes with different heels—one high, the other low."

"Never mind, we'll see her yet—they can't hide under their long veils forever."

[*They descend the stairway. The stage is empty. ALGISTA, barefoot, in a nightdress, covered with a long dark veil, comes out from the bedchamber. She cuts the skin on her breast with a poniard, then goes into a dark corner, and lies down, half covering herself with the black veil.*

The KING comes out of the dining hall, accompanied by a noisy crowd. He is conducted as far as his chamber.]

KING. My friends, I thank you for sharing in the glorious feast and for cheering me and the queen with merry songs and becoming jests. Now go and sleep, after leaving a guard here, and may God bless us all.

THE KNIGHTS, PAGES, AND SERVANTS. [*Shouting loudly and discordantly:*]

"May God preserve the King and the Queen for many years!"

"And may he send happiness to the King, the Queen, and the heir!"

"Yes, and an heir!"

"A happy night to you, your majesty!"

"And a propitious one!"

[*The KING goes in. The knights silence the noisy and amusing pages. Then they go. Two armed knights remain at the door of the royal bedchamber. They speak in whispers. Then, leaning on their lances, their backs against the columns, they doze. Some of the torches go out. Rustlings and shufflings*

are heard in the silence. ALGISTA moans. The knights open their eyes with a start.

FIRST KNIGHT. There's someone here.

SECOND KNIGHT. Do you remember someone cried out when all were yet at the table?

FIRST KNIGHT. There's a woman lying here.

[*Both bend over ALGISTA.*]

ALGISTA. [*With a moan.*] Help!

[*The knights look at her in the light of a torch.*]

FIRST KNIGHT. What a beauty!

SECOND KNIGHT. Someone has plunged a dagger into her breast.

FIRST KNIGHT. Quite a weak blow. The fair one is frightened, but is not dangerously wounded. It was a frail blow—like that of a child or of a woman.

SECOND KNIGHT. Who are you, fair one?

ALGISTA. Bertha.

SECOND KNIGHT. She is calling for Bertha.

ALGISTA. I am Bertha.

FIRST KNIGHT. The Queen?

ALGISTA. Yes.

FIRST KNIGHT. The Queen is with the King in his chamber. You are delirious, fair one.

SECOND KNIGHT. She has again closed her eyes.

FIRST KNIGHT. Well, what shall we do with her?

SECOND KNIGHT. We had better call the seneschal.

FIRST KNIGHT. Would it be well that all should hear at once of this dark, strange happening?

SECOND KNIGHT. What then had we better do?

FIRST KNIGHT. Let us knock on the King's door. He will praise us for our discretion. Perhaps this fair one or some other one will have to be taken away without much ado, so that no one should know what happened here.

SECOND KNIGHT. Perhaps you are right.

[*They walk away from ALGISTA. ALGISTA moans loudly. MALGISTA runs across the scene, wailing.*]

MALGISTA. Where is my daughter Algista? Algista, Algista, where are you?

[*She runs away. Her wails are heard from behind the scene. The knights, ladies and pages come running in. The KING, hearing the noise, comes out.*]

KING. What is the matter here?

[*The hall resounds with exclamations, din.*]

ALGISTA. My lord Khlodoveg, save me!

KING. Who is this woman?

FIRST KNIGHT. We found her lying here in the dark corner, wounded by someone. We questioned her, and she says that she is Queen Bertha.

KING. What can she mean! The Queen is in our chamber, resting on my couch.

ALGISTA. [*In a faint voice.*] They undressed me and left me. Only one remained. Her face was covered. But I recognized her. She struck me with a poniard—then dragged me out here. My maid Algista has plotted evil against me.

KING. What are you saying, unhappy woman! Surely I haven't shared my couch with a servant maid!

ALGISTA. Oh, my sorrow! I am dying, I, a King's daughter, I, young and beautiful—and she my slave, the lame and freckled wench Algista, will be a queen! I am lying on stones, and my slave on my couch!

KING. Women, go into my chamber, dress the queen, and bring her here; the true queen shall detect the imposter, and the truth shall shine forth more brightly than the sun.

MALGISTA. [*Running in.*] My good people, tell me where is my daughter Algista?

KING. Look, is not this your daughter, wounded by someone?

MALGISTA. Algista, my dear child, who has offended you?

[*She throws herself towards ALGISTA, looks at her closely, jumps up with a loud cry, and draws back. Again she throws herself on her knees before ALGISTA.*]

MALGISTA. My beloved mistress Bertha, what is the matter with you? Why are you lying here, half naked, on these cold stones? Why has your husband driven you away from his couch?

ALGISTA. My faithful Malgista, what a sorrow! What a shame! Your daughter, undressing me, struck me with a poniard. I fell at her feet like one dead. She dragged me here, threw me into the dark corner, and herself went to my couch.

MALGISTA. Oh, what a sorrow! Oh, mad Algista, what have you done?

[*BERTHA comes out of the chamber, and the women with her.*]

MALGISTA. My unfortunate daughter, mad Algista! Why have you raised your hand against your mistress?

LINGARD. That was why she tried to assure me that the queen was freckled and lame!

FIRST KNIGHT. When? What do you mean?

LINGARD. Wait, and I'll tell the King everything.

BERTHA. Malgista, what are you saying? Or has sorrow dimmed your reason? There lies your daughter, wounded by someone.

MALGISTA. Oh, crafty one! You are Algista, you are my daughter, and here lies our mistress Bertha. You have thought of killing her, but she is still alive and will expose your plot.

KING. Who is to be believed?

BERTHA. I am Bertha, King Koloman's daughter.

ALGISTA. I am Queen Bertha.

BERTHA. King, I was wedded to you.

ALGISTA. I was wedded to you, Khlodoveg.

BERTHA. I sat with you at the banqueting table.

ALGISTA. When I sat with you at the table I asked you, "My sire, kiss my shoulders."

BERTHA. It was I who said those words.

ALGISTA. Aloud?

BERTHA. I whispered them in my master's ear.

ALGISTA. How, then, could I have heard them?

BERTHA. Malgista has taught you.

ALGISTA. No one has taught me. I only wished my master's caress.

BERTHA. Return the knights who brought me here—they will tell you . . .

ALGISTA. King, haven't my father's ambassadors told you that I was beautiful?

KING. Yes. Would I have taken an ugly woman?

ALGISTA. King, look how beautiful I am; then look how freckled she is.

BERTHA. Yes; but I am a queen, and you, beautiful Algista, are my maid.

ALGISTA. King, one of her legs is shorter than the other.

BERTHA. Yes, I'm lame, but a queen.

ALGISTA. King, did my father's ambassadors tell you that Bertha was freckled and lame?

KING. No. I would not have consented to take a lame and freckled wife, and I did not think that King Koloman meant to deceive me.

[ALGISTA *pretends to have lost consciousness.*]

MALGISTA. [*Bending over her.*] My dear mistress!

BERTHA. The net of deceit, the broad net of deceit, has been spread over me. Who will help me to break the sticky noose of deceit? To whom shall I

cry, "Help me"? I have been left here a sacrifice to deceit.

KING. I can see for myself which of the two is the deceiver. But what do you say, barons and knights,—who, in your opinion, is the queen?

THE KNIGHTS. This handsome, wounded lady.

KING. Who is the deceiver?

THE KNIGHTS. This lame, freckled woman.

KING. What should be done with her?

MALGISTA. King, forgive my daughter! The foe of humankind has disturbed her reason. For my faithfulness to the queen, forgive my daughter.

KING. Take her deep into the wood, and may God's will be upon her. As for her mother . . .

ALGISTA. King, let this faithful woman stay with me. You can see that she has convicted her own daughter—she is a truly faithful soul!

KING. Let it be as you wish, dear queen.

BERTHA. I am sorry for you, King. You have been duped!

[BERTHA is led away. ALGISTA is raised up and borne into the royal bedchamber. The people go away.]

A DISPASSIONATE VOICE. "The night passes. Day. Night. Day. Nights and days. Years. In the darkness of time the years pass quickly. Ten years."

ACT II

The same corridor. ALGISTA comes out impetuously from the middle door wearing the sumptuous costume of a queen. She walks agitatedly up and down the corridor. MALGISTA comes out after her. The last lines of a song are heard:

The King has believed
The grey-haired wizard,

And has driven his loving wife
From his threshold.
The dupes extol
The wizard's offspring.
The wizard and she
Rule the land.
Where is the true queen?
She's in a dense wood.
Oh, will she return?
I'll tell you in another song.

ALGISTA. Has the King noticed?

MALGISTA. No, mistress—everyone is intently listening to the songs of the wandering minstrel.

ALGISTA. Have you recognised him?

[MALGISTA is silent.]

MALGISTA. He will not dare to say anything. He will not think of saying that King Koloman, Bertha's father and his father, is a deceiver.

ALGISTA. I have a dread!

MALGISTA. Don't be afraid, my beloved daughter.

ALGISTA. No, I really don't feel a dread—I am merely tired. It was not that I was thinking of. I believed that people wished freedom and light. How persistently, how cunningly, night and day, I kept on repeating to the King one and the same thing with all the words I could find. He has believed me; at last he has learnt to think my thoughts. But he can do nothing but what his ancestors did: wage war, judge, and reward,—nothing audacious. The lords wish to rule—that I can understand. But the people—all those simple folk, agriculturists and artisans,—oh, how they love to be slaves!

MALGISTA. Everyone says that since you have been queen the King has been merciful to his people, generous to his servants, just to all who resort to

his judgment. The nation is blessing your name, our beloved Queen Bertha.

ALGISTA. They extol the name of Bertha! But if the truth should become known, and the King should learn my name—would he extol the sweet name of Algista?

MALGISTA. The King will not find out.

ALGISTA. He will find out.

MALGISTA. If he finds out, he won't believe.

ALGISTA. They are coming.

[MALGISTA walks away, and pauses behind a column. ALGISTA stands in the fore part of the corridor, half turning toward the middle doors, so that her face is in the shadow. From the hall enter THE KING, PRINCE ETHELBERT in the dress of a wandering minstrel, knights, ladies, and pages.]

KING. Dear Bertha, light of my eyes, why have you left us? He has sung two more songs for us, one better than the other.

ALGISTA. The art of the wandering minstrel is great; who among men could have sung so sweetly, yet so craftily? Are not his cunning tunes inspired by the power of some unclean demon?

KING. He looks to me like quite a devout man.

ALGISTA. The enemy of man might come even in a priest's cassock. His evil songs have made me giddy.

KING. Forgive me, dear Bertha. I thought you enjoyed them. Minstrel, take this gold, and rest a little. Your songs are good, your art is great, and I wonder whether there is not some magic force in it.

ETHELBERT. My sister sings better, and if the gracious Queen Bertha left the radiant kingly table in order not to hear my songs, then the singing of my sister is sure to soothe her majesty.

KING. And where is your sister?

ETHELBERT. She is with me. She is waiting outside. If your majesty will permit me, I will bring her here.

KING. Bring her here.

ETHELBERT. [*Going past ALGISTA.*] And so the wench Algista is a queen.

ALGISTA. The son of a deceiver is going from deceit to deceit.

ETHELBERT. The beautiful body will be subjected to lashings of the whip, and to a contemptible death.

[*He goes out.*]

KING. What did the wandering minstrel mumble to you in passing?

ALGISTA. Incomprehensible words. He is possessed of an unclean spirit, and his mind is given to cruel, evil visions. He sees only treasons, perfidies, blood, torments and death. It was to no purpose that you asked him to bring his sister here. If she is like him, they will bring upon you, my beloved lord, and upon me, unfortunate woman, their evil charms.

KING. Then let them be told not to come in.

[*Barely has the KING begun speaking, when BERTHA walks quickly up the middle stairway. A young boy walks at her side—and behind them* ETHELBERT.]

KING. Dear minstrel, your songs have given pleasure to our ears. I believe that the singing and voice of your sister are even more skilful and agreeable. But the queen is tired, and cannot listen to songs just now. So don't be vexed, fair singer, if you have waited for your turn in vain. Take this gold, and leave us—perhaps the queen and I will send for you to-morrow.

BERTHA. Weary also am I, Queen Bertha. Driven out by you, dear husband, because you believed

Algista more than you did me, I have roamed a long time through the dreamy woods, up steep mountains, across broad valleys. The fleet winds stung me, the frequent rains drenched me, the red sun scorched me, the thorny bushes tore my clothes and scratched my body, the sand and the stones wounded my feet. In the field, under a haystack, I bore thee a son, oh King. A poor old woman swathed him; I christened him in a poor village church, and called him Carl. And may he be a great king. Take him, beloved King, and do not drive me from your couch.

ALGISTA. Singer, you have sung your song, though no one wished to hear you. Go ahead, and sing a little more. You have sung about yourself, now sing about me.

BERTHA. You are my maid-servant, Algista. There behind the column, pale with hatred and fear, is your mother, Malgista.

ETHELBERT. My dear Bertha, don't condescend to discuss with a slave. King, know then that I am Ethelbert, the son of King Koloman, the brother of your unfortunate wife Bertha, whom you have driven away because of the wiles of the evil Algista.

ALGISTA. He is mad, and his sister is like him.

ETHELBERT. The knights who brought you Bertha ten years ago are with me. You will recognise them, and they will tell you the truth.

[He blows a golden horn. Twelve knights ascend the middle stairway.]

ETHELBERT. And here, your majesty, is a letter from King Koloman.

[He gives the KING the letter.]

KING. Chancellor, unseal this letter, and we shall read it in the council chamber, in a manner becoming to our royal dignity in reading royal epistles. And now, wandering minstrel, who call yourself Prince

Ethelbert, tell us once more: do you affirm that this woman who has come with you is the beautiful Bertha, the daughter of King Koloman?

ETHELBERT. Yes, this is Queen Bertha, your wife, and the daughter of my father, King Koloman.

ALGISTA. [*Laughs.*] Beautiful Bertha! Indeed! Look, King, what a large mouth she has! How freckled she is! And one of her legs is longer than the other.

BERTHA. You remember all that very well, Algista! And why shouldn't you, you who used to dress me?

ETHELBERT. My sister was beautiful, but Algista spoiled her beauty on the way here by casting her evil spells upon her. Look at my sister, King; does she not resemble me?

ALGISTA. You are the same red-haired monstrosity that she is.

ETHELBERT. Nevertheless, the girls of my land, and even of other lands, have admired me, and the loveliest one of them . . .

ALGISTA. Jingle gold, and a wanton girl will hang herself about your neck.

ETHELBERT. King, inquire of my travelling companions. Perhaps you will recall their faces.

KING. Let us go to the council chamber. We will read this parchment, examine the matter thoroughly, and decide it righteously. And our judgment upon those who have contrived the plot to deceive us shall be terrible.

[*He goes through the middle door. All follow him, except ALGISTA and MALGISTA.*]

MALGISTA. [*Approaching her daughter.*] My dear mistress, go to your place at the side of the King. Fear nothing. Don't admit anything. The King loves you, and he will believe only you.

ALGISTA. I'll remain here. I am tired. I do not wish to be Bertha.

MALGISTA. You are mad, to say that! You will destroy yourself—and me!

ALGISTA. Am I not beautiful? Have I not been faithful to him? Have I not given him a son? Did you see? They have brought along with them a consumptive hybrid; but my son, my son—he is strong, beautiful. Oh my son Khilperik!

MALGISTA. So there, you see, everything is in your favour, my daughter. So fear nothing—go boldly and take your place—the King will believe you.

ALGISTA. The hour of the last trial has come. If he loves me, if the long days and the sweet nights have bound us together, so he will not depose me, and he will crown Algista. I am going to him, to reveal my name.

MALGISTA. You are mad; you have contrived the impossible.

ALGISTA. I am going!

[*She goes to the doors of the hall; MALGISTA tries to hold her back. There is a brief struggle.*]

ALGISTA. [*Crying loudly.*] King, I am Algista.

[*She walks impetuously into the hall. MALGISTA runs after her. Heard behind the corridor wall.*]

KING. Algista?

[*A din ensues; separate exclamations are heard.*]

ALGISTA. I am Algista. Here I am before you, Khlodoveg; judge me as you like; punish me or have mercy upon me—but remember, King, what I have been to you . . .

KING. Be silent! Deceiver and slave, you have disgraced my couch!

KNIGHTS and LADIES. Deceiver! Slave! Death to her!

ALGISTA. My beloved King Khlodoveg, I have been a faithful wife to you.

KING. Be silent. An ignominious death . . .

ALGISTA. Khlodoveg, my dear husband Khlodoveg . . .

KING. Women, compel her to be silent.

[ALGISTA cries out hoarsely. There is a din and exclamations. A voice makes itself audible.]

CHANCELLOR. Silence. The King will pronounce his sentence.

KING. Let her be stripped of the crown, the jewels, and the queenly garments. You, dear Queen Bertha, will take your place. The deceiver will be punished with a cruel and ignominious public death—her bared body will be subjected to many lashes of the whip, until it is dead; it is then to be thrown into the ditch, to be eaten by the dogs. Her young boy is to be beaten, and hanged. And you and I, Queen, will take our places in a high balcony and look down upon her torments, and listen to her wails. Beat the deceiver!

[ALGISTA'S exclamations are drowned by the din. MALGISTA'S wails are heard. There is laughter, din, and outcries. The din grows louder and louder—mingled with coarse laughter. The knights, ladies, pages, man-servants, and maid-servants issue from the hall with outcries.]

THE KNIGHTS, LADIES, PAGES, MAN-SERVANTS, and MAID-SERVANTS.—

“The deceiver has been caught.”

“Think of it—she’s just a common wench—Algista.”

“Her finery has been torn from her, and put on the real queen.”

“Where is she to be punished?”

"Here, in this courtyard, in the midst of the people who have come to see the spectacle."

"Look, she is already being undressed."

"The deceiver will be punished at once—to-day."

"With a cruel, ignominious death."

"She will be beaten to death with whips made of ox-hide."

"And her youngster will be hanged."

"I spat straight into her eyes!"

"I slapped one of her cheeks with my hand."

"She has only her chemise on, and we will tear it from her at once."

"There, they are bringing her here!"

[From the door of the hall ALGISTA is led out. All crowd round her, with mirthful, humiliating shouts. She is led down the stairway, into the pit where the door of the prison is. The corridor is wrapt in darkness. MALGISTA wails.]

MALGISTA. My good people, my good people, save my daughter Algista!

ACT III

The same corridor. Night. The wail of dogs is heard. The full moon casts a bright streak of light on the upper steps and on the edge of the landing, leaving the rest of the place in darkness. The corridor is empty at first. Afterwards MALGISTA is seen to ascend the side stairs. On her shoulders she bears ALGISTA's body, half-naked, barely covered by the blood-stained, torn clothes. Having placed ALGISTA on the place lit up by the moon, she sits down beside her, weeping and quietly keening.

MALGISTA. Oh my daughter, oh my daughter! They have beaten you and tormented you to death. The pitiless whips lashed you a long time, while the

servants and the small boys laughed. And my Algista died. Then they threw her into the moat of the castle to be eaten up by dogs—but the dogs did not touch her; they howled over her body, howled agonisingly over the body of their affectionate mistress. And the moon rose, and the dogs howled, and my anguish rose to heaven.

[She weeps, almost howling. The moaning of dogs is heard.. MALGISTA rises slowly and walks away.]

MALGISTA. My sorrow rises to the cold moon, to the clear heavens. The dogs howl, smelling the blood of their affectionate mistress—and I will howl on the spot where the earth absorbed her abundant blood.

[MALGISTA goes out.]

ALGISTA. *[She raises herself, and calls:]* Sleepers, awaken!

[Everything is silent. ALGISTA falls back. MALGISTA returns, bringing the dead boy with her. She puts him at ALGISTA's side. Then she sits over them, and weeps in a keening voice.]

MALGISTA. And they took no pity on the innocent boy. They beat him and tormented him, and then threw him down at his mother's side. Oh Algista, Algista, oh my daughter!

ALGISTA. *[She raises herself, and again cries out:]* Sleepers, awaken!

MALGISTA. *[Bending down over her, and asking in a low voice:]* My dear daughter, are you alive?

ALGISTA. In this terrible hour only the dead are alive.

[From behind the window is heard the call of the watch. Someone ascends the stairway at the side and looks into the corridor. The castle, little by little, becomes filled with quiet rustlings and noises, which gradually grow louder.]

MALGISTA. My daughter, tell me—you haven't died? Are you alive?

ALGISTA. The hour of the last trial is near.

MALGISTA. Or are you risen from the dead, awakened by the powers of her who works her spells in the quiet heavens, or by the mysterious whisper of her who wanders near the cross-roads of night?

ALGISTA. Look—here are two paths—he will choose one of them. Whether I am alive, or whether I am dead . . .

[Slowly she raises herself, and calls.]

ALGISTA. Whether you are alive, or whether you are dead, rise up, Khilperik, my son.

[The boy raises himself. In the light of the moon are to be seen the pale faces of ALGISTA and the boy, and their blood-stained clothes. ALGISTA turns her face to the door leading to the royal sleeping chamber and cries in a loud, wild voice which fills the whole expanse of the place:]

Sleepers, awaken!

[The castle becomes filled with din, confused uproar, outcries, the clang of arms. Servants, pages, knights, and women run across the corridor. The corridor becomes filled with a confused crowd of people. Exclamations are heard.]

MAN-SERVANTS, MAID-SERVANTS, PAGES, KNIGHTS, LADIES.—

“Who shouted so loudly here?”

“What has happened?”

“Has an enemy attacked us?”

“Have the dead risen?”

“Was it not the trumpet of the archangel that we heard—calling us to the last judgment?”

“It is dreadful!”

“Miracles are happening here.”

“Spilt blood is crying to heaven.”

"How dark it is."

"Where are the torches?"

[Someone brings in a torch, then another, and another. The torch-bearers wander aimlessly about the corridor. Some of the torches are put into their rings. The people cry out:]

"Look—here is Algista!"

"The tormented queen has risen!"

"And her son too!"

"Woe to us—have we not done an evil deed?"

MALGISTA. Woe to you—you have done an evil deed: you have broken a beautiful vessel, and you have spilt priceless wine!

[The corridor becomes brighter and brighter with the light of the torches. ALGISTA and her son are at the edge of the stairs; the others crowd near the walls and the columns. THE KING, BERTHA, and ETHELBERT come out. KHLODOVEG and BERTHA are but lightly dressed, but their crowns are on their heads. An unsheathed sword is in the King's hand. The din dies down. All except the King stand motionless and look in silence at ALGISTA.]

MALGISTA. Algista, dear daughter, tell him sweet words of love.

ALGISTA. King, you have done an evil deed, but my love forgives you. Leave this stranger, and follow me towards a life radiant and free.

KING. Who are you? And why are you here? If you are alive, then hide from our righteous anger. If you have risen from the dead, then return to your resting-place, and don't disturb those who live upon the earth with your appearances in the night.

MALGISTA. Algista, dear daughter, call him to follow you.

ALGISTA. My beloved lord and husband, Khlodo-

veg, I am your Algista. I love you, and I have come to you to call you to me. Come to me, follow me.

KING. You have deceived me.

ALGISTA. I have been faithful to you, and I shall remain faithful to you until the end.

BERTHA. King, kill the sorceress.

ALGISTA. Tell me, Khlodoveg, did you love me?

KING. I loved you.

ALGISTA. Tell me, do you love me?

KING. I love you.

ALGISTA. Then follow me.

KING. Have the torments of your well-deserved punishment darkened your reason? Or have you come to us moved by evil spells? Tell us, then, who you are? An apparition of night, or the living Algista?

BERTHA. King, you have a sword in your hand. Plunge its steel into the evil heart of the deceiver.

MALGISTA. Algista, dear daughter, bewitch him with sweet words of love; speak to him mysterious conjurations.

ALGISTA. I have come to you—take me as you wish, dead or alive. With all the power of my immeasurable love, with all the strength of my unendurable torments, with all my will exulting over life and over death, I have bought from the earth, the heavens, and the dark underground world, your body, your soul, and your midnight shadow. Here I am before you, scarcely dead, scarcely breathing, scarcely smouldering, in a fearful wavering at the cross-roads, my blood in the damp earth, and my voice calling to the witching moon—and I am calling to you: come to me, choose our way to life or to death, as you will; come with me, love me—or remain here, but also with me, with me dead. Love me, my lord and husband, forever mine, love me.

KING. Through deception you have come to my couch,—you have usurped the name and the honour of the queen.

BERTHA. She is a witch. Pierce her through quickly with your sword.

ALGISTA. When you loved me, when you caressed me, when you whispered tender words to me, what was to us the glitter of your crown, your supreme power? Have I not intoxicated you with all the delights of love? Have I not proclaimed your every joy with my radiant gaiety? Have I not dissolved your every sorrow in my tears? Have I not been to you as the clear sky, and the cool shade, and the twitter-bird, and the sonorously purling stream? My white, bare arms have come down on your weary shoulders lighter than a regal necklace. The passionate kisses from my red lips were sweeter to you than Falernian wine. My eyes glowed more brilliantly for you than the diamonds and rubies of your crown. Have I not been the loveliest of all queens? And was it not you who said that I was the wisest of wives, that my words fell like gold on the light embers of the speeches of the eldest of your lords?

KING. You were beautiful and wise, and I loved you. But the past is irrevocable. Be gone.

BERTHA. Pierce her with the sword.

ALGISTA. I shall not leave you. We are united forever by the secret power of my love.

KING. Here is my wife, Queen Bertha—our son and heir, Carl, is reposing under the watch of the faithful—there is no room here for you and your son.

ALGISTA. Tell me, do you love me?

KING. I love you.

ALGISTA. Then let Queen Bertha and young Carl remain here. Give up your crown to him and follow

me. I shall reveal to you a happy, free world. I shall lead you into a valley among distant hills, where there are no masters and no slaves, where the air of freedom is light and sweet.

KING. Your speeches are mad. I am the King.

BERTHA. Kill her.

ALGISTA. Your fate is in your hands, Khlodoveg. Look—the torches are going out. Listen—behind the window there is the howling of sharp-scented dogs, smelling out in the thin dust of the road the invisible tracks. Look, King, how everything is quiet, dark, and still around you, and see how silent they all are, and only my words fall in the darkness before you.

KING. Mad woman, be gone! Pages, take her away!

[Everyone around the KING is motionless, and everyone is looking at ALGISTA.]

ALGISTA. Only I am here; all life and all death is in me—but the choice is yours, Khlodoveg, my dear lord and husband. The last instant is approaching. Fate does not wait. I say to you for the last time: follow me, come with me towards life; life is only with me—but there where you are, in the madness of your crown, in your blood-stained mantle, turning to stone,—there is death. Take off your crown and follow me.

KING. I will not follow you. I am the King. Be gone, mad woman!

[The chimes of the church clock are heard from behind the window.]

ALGISTA. The hour has come. Khlodoveg, your choice has been made. You are not coming with me? No?

KING. No.

MALGISTA. A cold stone among stones he stands before you, Algista. Algista, my serpent-eyed daugh-

ter, bewitch him with terrible words, consecrate him to eternal immobility.

ALGISTA. A cold stone among stones you stand before me. Turn to stone, King; become a cold stone until time shall cause you to perish also.

[ALGISTA *falls at the KING's feet. Her son falls on her corpse. The KING and the rest stand motionless.*

A DISPASSIONATE VOICE. "Behold—Algista has died, Khilperik has died. Their eternally unconsoled mother stands over them. Behold—Khlodoveg and those with him have turned to stone. Behold—they stand like statues hewn out of stone. Behold—a spectacle of life turned to stone has become a flat picture, the moon has grown dim and every light is running from this place,—the immense proud chamber has become hidden behind the black cloud of death. And believe—Love conquers by Death—Love and Death are one."

NOTE.—The substance of this tragedy is included in the general outlines in the traditionary tale about Queen Bertha, the Long-legged, the mother of Carl the Great. The King's name is changed intentionally, in order to separate the tragedy from the history, and even from the legend, which is constructed somewhat differently, and ends not at all as I end it. This is how this legend is constructed in G. H. Potanin's book, *Eastern Motifs*, pp. 5-7:

"The French king Pepin wants to marry; a party of his peers go to the city Buda in Hungary to ask the Hungarian King for his daughter. The King is very much flattered by the match, but is afraid

that Pepin would reject his bride because of her deformity: one of her legs is longer than the other. The peers, however, though they are personally acquainted with this fact, remain firm in their first resolution. The parents let their daughter go, accompanied by two maid-servants, an old one and a young one; the old one is Margista, the young one her daughter Algista. The bride is received in Paris with honour; then the night comes, and Bertha has to go to her bridal-couch. Margista expresses the fear that Pepin might kill her; Bertha is agitated; Margista, in order to save the Princess, consents to send Algista in her place. Bertha passes the night in Margista's room, and in the morning steals stealthily into the royal bedchamber in order to change places with Algista without attracting the King's attention. At her entry, Algista wounds herself with a knife and accuses Bertha of the intention of killing her. The King, accepting Algista for Bertha, is indignant and orders the punishment of the supposed Algista. Bertha is led away into a wood, and gets lost there. . . . She wanders a long time in the wood, and at last reaches the house of a miller, with whom she settles. The King lives with Algista, without suspecting the deception, and she bears him two sons. Bertha's parents, deciding to see their daughter, come to Paris and find Algista in the Queen's place. The Hungarian King, suspecting that the change has been made by Pepin himself, wants to return to Hungary and come with an army in order to punish Pepin, but Pepin prevails upon his father-in-law to go hunting with him before taking his departure. Pepin gets lost on the way and finds himself in the house of the miller with whom Bertha has lived and who has two daughters. Pepin requests the miller to send him one of his three maidens to pass the

night with him. The miller sends him Bertha, after preparing for the King a bed of leaves in a cart. . . . Here Bertha tells the King who she is and how she happens to be with the miller. The long leg convinces the King that this is the real Bertha, and that the one whom he has accepted for Bertha is an usurper. He takes Bertha to Paris, makes her the Queen, punishes the false Bertha, and makes peace with the parents of the real one. The real Bertha bears a son, who, because he was conceived in a cart, or else because he was born in one, has been named *Charro mano*, that is, Carl.

THE POPULAR DRAMA OF JAPAN

PART I

Japan is the absurd Japan of *The Mikado*, or the pretty, pathetic Japan of *Madame Butterfly*, or possibly the stern abstraction of *Typhoon*—all of them false—to the average occidental.

“Happy Japan
Garden of glitter!
Flower and fan,
Flutter and flitter.
Lord of Bamboo
(Juvenile Whacker)
Porcelain too,
Tea-tray and lacquer!”

Behold the setting and all the necessary properties for a charming *matinée* entertainment. The curtain is up, and we are ready for the entrance of the heroine, a little creature with a gay kimono and a paper umbrella by way of protection against the snow of cherry petals sure to fall before the end of the first act. As a matter of fact, there would be no heroine in Japan: and the drama of the real Japan, with its significant reflection of the life and ideals, is as remote from the artificial play drama by which we think we are interpreting them as the three-legged crow who lives in the Japanese sun is remote from the hare that sits under the great cassia-tree in the Japanese moon.

The origin of the popular drama, as distinct from the semi-religious and aristocratic *Noh*, smacks of

a racy bit of scandal. A certain priestess of the Temple of Kitsuki, Okuni, fell in love with a swash-buckler named Nagoya Sanza and ran away with him to Kyoto in the year 1575. There by the river Kamo, near what is now known as Theater Street, she assembled a little company of persons about her and gave performances of a theatrical nature. Later she went with Sanza to Yedo, the ancient Tokyo, and organized a regular theater. Lafcadio Hearn adds a pleasant finishing touch to the story of Okuni. "The family still live at Kitsuki, and till the late revolution the head of the family was always entitled to a share in the profits of the local theater, because his ancestor, the beautiful priestess, had founded the art." It was in 1576, it will be remembered by way of analogy, just one year after Okuni's flight to Kyoto, that the "Earl of Leicester's servants" erected the first public theater of England.

Naturally, Okuni did not suddenly invent drama. The more general origin goes back to the *kagura* dances, and to the *katari* or narrative recitation from memory of the well-known historical tales of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The *kagura* was developed by the introduction of singing and flute accompaniment, and the *katari* by the importation of a new musical instrument in the middle of the seventeenth century, much better adapted for dramatic purposes than the flute, the *samisen*. At the same time a new story suddenly became popular in Yedo dealing with the loves of the famous Yoshitune and the Lady Joruri; and since then the name *Joruri* has been applied to a large class of dramatic compositions. These furnished much of the material of the early acted plays. Probably the *saru-gaku*, a farcical entertainment akin to the *kyogen*, or "mad words" inserted between the *Noh* plays, also influ-

enced the development of comedy in the early drama of Japan.

Partly owing to the superiority of the women in dancing, they played an important part in the new popular drama; so much so that from 1603 to 1629 the drama goes by the general name of "Woman's Plays." But in spite of the freedom enjoyed by the women of feudal Japan in every other profession, in the literary, religious, diplomatic, and even military life of the day, it was not very long after Okuni's exploits that they were forbidden on moral grounds to act in public, or to perform at all in company with men. From 1604 to 1888, accordingly, they practically disappeared from the Japanese stage. Meanwhile, and perhaps as a result, the drama shot off temporarily into a strange field which is paralleled in the history of no other country.

In the early seventeenth century the marionette theater represented the most significant phase of dramatic movement. The *Ayatsuri Shibai*, or doll theater, had been known, it is true, even before the *Noh* or *Kabuki Shibai*, for the marionettes were introduced into Japan by way of China and Korea from India, along with Buddhism and painting, but they had scarcely formed a legitimate stage. The most probable reason for the sudden eminence in the seventeenth century was that Chikamatsu, the greatest dramatist the country lays claim to, lived at this time and through some odd chance wrote his plays solely for the famous marionette theater of Osaka. Whatever the cause, the immense popularity of the *Ayatsuri* was responsible for a curious innovation in the *Kabuki* drama. The real actors set themselves perversely to imitating as far as possible the movements of the marionettes, and gradually established a technique of acting based on the wholly

artificial principles of the workings of wooden dolls. A singer to explain the action, with orchestral accompaniment, a necessary feature of the marionette performance but obviously out of place on any other stage, was a further experiment which became an established custom. Traces of the marionette theater may be seen in every ordinary theater to this day.

The puppets have lost none of their original popularity, although the *Ayatsuri Shibai* no longer supersedes the *Kabuki* in importance. The mechanical ingenuity with which they are contrived is remarkable. A begging priest performs a most elaborate traditional dance; the small hero opens and shuts his mouth, rolls his eyeballs, and even raises his eyebrows as he struts up and down the stage; young ladies kneel and play the *koto* or sew, or flirt their fans; literary men write poems; military ones fight with a terrible display of gymnastic agility—and all with an incredibly minute and delicate simulation of reality. The puppets are larger than those seen in America or Europe, almost half life-size, and are operated by “black men” in full view of the audience. These “black men” or *korombo* are themselves actors in the highest sense of the word, for they must so efface themselves as to be completely forgotten by the audience. If the *korombo* is artist enough to make his own face a mask and obliterate all sense of his personality, he may appear openly on the stage; otherwise he must wear the black mask from which he has derived his name. Such a play as *The Yellow Jacket* exactly reverses the oriental conception of the *korombo*, for here the property man succeeds in concentrating upon himself the chief attention of the audience by imitating an impersonal character which in reality he does not possess. A certain custom of introducing the important *korombo*

to the audience before the play begins—an honor never bestowed upon the actors of the *Kabuki Shibai*—is in recognition of their genuine dramatic ability. The singer is also introduced, for his part of interpreting the libretto, expressing the emotion of the rôles, and explaining the action when it is necessary, as well as the part played by the *korombo*, is important to the success of the performance.

The plays themselves command the respect and the serious attention of the people. Chikamatsu, the most famous writer of puppet plays, a little officiously styled the "Shakespeare of Japan," was born in 1653. Some fifty-one of his plays are recorded, and as many more are attributed to him. Most of them are in five acts, and take as long to perform as a Shakespearian drama. As far as construction is concerned, they are rambling and illogical, frequently introducing incidents of vague connection with the main plot, and they abound in melodramatic scenes of blood and violence. But the themes are those of all Japanese plays—bravery, loyalty, filial piety, revenge.

For instance, a blind man becomes jealous of his wife, who is frequently gone from the house for long periods without explanation. In reality, she goes to the Temple of Kwannon to pray for the recovery of her husband's sight. Meanwhile he becomes discouraged and jumps over a cliff, and when the faithful wife discovers the tragedy she hurls herself after him. Then the goddess appears and, as a reward for the wife's piety, brings them both back to life and restores the eyesight of the blind man. Another faithful wife in a play called *Kamiji* gives up her money and even her kimono that her husband may buy his mistress Koharu from her keeper, and then plans to enter a nunnery with her child, that he may

be left quite free to carry out his desires. But Koharu and the husband are so overcome with her generosity that they commit suicide together, thus expiating their sin and restoring to honor the name of the gentle wife.

The famous *Chiushingura*, in one of its fifty versions, is a favorite puppet play. The story of the forty-seven loyal retainers, perhaps the best known of all Japanese tales, is based on historic events occurring in the early part of the eighteenth century. Yenya, a daimio, is made to suffer unbearable affronts at the instigation of a superior daimio, Moronaho. Driven to desperation, he finally, within the precincts of the royal palace, draws his sword and wounds Moronaho. For this unpardonable sin he is forced to commit *hara-kiri*, but in dying he bestows his sword upon his faithful retainer, Yuranosuke, and orders him to exact vengeance for his death. Afterwards his property is confiscated and his followers are scattered, becoming known as *ronin* or wave-men, but forty-seven of them secretly band together under the leadership of Yuranosuke and conspire vengeance. The better to disguise their designs, the homeless *ronin* disband again, and Yuranosuke goes to Kyoto, where he leads a licentious life of drunken revelry for three years, for the subtle purpose of throwing Moronaho more completely off his guard. When the right moment to strike finally arrives, the surprise attack is made, Moronaho is at last dispatched, and vengeance is accomplished. Then, in honorable expiation of their deed, the forty-seven loyal retainers perform *hara-kiri* together, at the Temple of Sengaku in the suburbs of Tokyo, where the graves may be visited to this day. Whether acted by marionettes or by members of the Imperial Theater of Tokyo, the *Chius-*

hingura is an effective production; it brings close the "old unhappy far-off things, and battles of long ago!"

The conditions in spite of which the Japanese drama has become a real factor in the national life are not unlike those with which the drama has had to struggle in every country. From the first the actors were drawn from the lower classes of society. They were popularly styled "riverside beggars," and were designated in all enumerations by the terms otherwise applied only to animals. Like the class of social outcasts known as *eta*, they were compelled to live in separate districts, and were unrecognised by society. Immediately after the law prohibiting women from acting in public, men and boys took the female rôles, but the morality of the stage was even lower, if possible, than before. Up to this time there had been no direct law prohibiting the *samurai* or nobility from attending the theater, and between 1624 and 1643 they resorted freely to the *Kabuki* as well as the *Noh Shibai*. In 1648, however, the Shogunate issued an ordinance forbidding the wearing of swords at places of amusement. The managers of the theaters requested that the same ordinance be made to apply to the theaters as well, since they had been much troubled by the domineering young *samurai*, and when the theaters were accordingly made *dattō basho*, the *samurai* were virtually excluded, for they lost rank if they ever removed their two swords. There was a similar law enacted in France about the same time. It is easy to see how class distinction once made, a prejudice sprang up which eventually crystallized into a deep-rooted social antipathy on the part of the upper classes. The unfortunate result was that the standards of the drama were restricted for the next two hundred

years to those of the uneducated populace. It was not until the Meiji revolution in 1868 that actors were given for the first time the privilege of full citizenship, and that the theater was raised to a position of official respectability.

Another factor which has done much to injure the development of the drama has been the peculiar system under which theatrical managers have been forced to work. We are perhaps inclined to look upon the scalping system as a distinctly modern abuse upon society. When theaters were first organized in Japan they were organized in the same leisurely spirit that infests all manifestations of oriental life. They opened at ten o'clock, as indeed they still do except in the case of the comparatively few that are adopting the "foreign" plan, and remained open until ten or eleven at night. Going to the theater was an all-day affair. Tea houses were, of course, a necessary adjunct; but more frequently than not it came to be that the owner of the tea house supplied both the patronage and the capital of the theater, and that the theater manager was simply a tool in his hands. Tickets were bought through the tea house, and it was the tea house that absorbed the largest share of the profits. The manager of the theater himself never came into direct contact with the people. He was also restricted in his freedom of action by the fact that the actor is frequently a stockholder in the theater and thus has a controlling voice in its management. Under the stimulation of the "foreign cult" which is at present so popular in Japan, conditions relating to the theater are changing. As far as theater management is concerned, the outlook is more hopeful than it has ever been.

The Japanese theater is a large, loosely built struc-

ture, usually placarded on the outside with gaudy announcements of the plays in the form of picturesque hanging strips of cloth or painted pictures. Inside, in the old-style theaters, there are no seats; the floor, which is higher at the back, is partitioned off checker-board fashion with low railings into "boxes." Attendants are supplied by the tea houses connected with the theater. These *dekata*, wearing a curious antique costume, run around furnishing cushions to sit on, charcoal braziers, smoking boxes, tea and cake, or even hot food such as eels and rice. At the back of the theater is the "tear room," to which the women and girls retire when their feelings become too much for them.

The Tokyo theaters at present are an anomaly, for they represent every stage of development and transition. The *Misaki-za* is a relic of Yedo days; conservative in management, and traditional in every aspect; the *Ichimura-za* is the children's theater, where the little sons and grandsons of famous actors perform the same rôles as their elders, mimicking them in all seriousness, and not without an effective dignity of their own; the *Yuraku-za* and *Kabuki-za* have upheld the standards of the older Japanese stage until very recently, when they have shown signs of following the lead of the *Teikoku-za* in going over to European methods. Finally, there is the *Teikoku-za*, otherwise known as the Imperial Theater, an impressive grey stone structure, as handsome as any theater in Europe or America. It opens at the circumspect hour of five o'clock; it is equipped with an excellent café and dining room, serving both Japanese and foreign food; it employs young women as ushers; it has introduced both opera and ballet; in short, it is only an occasional extravagance, such as a ticket collector in full evening clothes, wearing

a *drawn-work* tie, that will remind you that Japan is not yet America. Some of the numerous societies, like the Literary and Art Society, the Free Theater Society, the Modern Theater Society, and the Saturday Theater Society, have organized theaters of their own. The most significant is the *Bungei Kyokai* theater, an unpretentious little building, with plain unvarnished woodwork, at the end of a narrow road like a country lane. Under the direction of Dr. Tsubouchi, perhaps the leading dramatic reformer of Japan, this theater has led in the intellectual movement of translating and producing foreign plays. The *Meiji-za*, one of the more important of the older theaters, recently came into possession of Ii, a proprietor and actor-manager of some note. The amusing notice which he posted outside of the theater is an instructive example of the long-winded courtesy and the self-abasement that are characteristic of the Japanese people, the integrity of which one is sometimes sceptical enough to doubt. "I humbly congratulate you on your good health and prosperity this cool autumn weather. By chance, I happened to purchase this theater, and hereafter all efforts will be directed to the giving of performances. I feel that I should accomplish something, but alas! I am so weak and stupid that I am ashamed when I think of the little hope and promise the future holds. I humbly ask your favor in the future as you have shown it in the past. I regret that the first performance will not be all that could be desired, but I beg your pardon for all defects and ask your assistance forever." Scarcely the method of advertising a play that we are familiar with!

The stage is arranged very much as our stages are, except that the device recently employed in some of our newer theaters like the Century in New York

City, of a revolving center to the stage upon which two or more scenes can be simultaneously set up, is very ancient in Japan. When the new scene is presented, the old one, with the actors still speaking, is whirled out of sight before the eyes of the audience, and the new one comes on with everyone in position and the action in full progress. An excellent opportunity is afforded for the lightning changes of costume and personality, of which the Japanese are so fond. There is one unfamiliar feature of the Japanese stage, and that is the *hanamichi*, or "flower path," so named because it is strewn with flowers at the approach of favorite actors. The *hanamichi* consists of two long raised passageways extending from the back of the theater to each side of the stage. A great deal of the action of the play takes place here: when anyone is supposed to have come from a long distance, for instance, he very naturally makes his entrance by way of the *hanamichi*; processions like those that string across the faded Japanese prints pass along it; sometimes knocking is heard at the back of the theater, and conversations are begun which are carried on for ten or fifteen minutes; exits are also made by way of the *hanamichi* after the curtain has been drawn, sometimes with a very delicate and lingering effectiveness. The use of the *hanamichi* in Max Reinhardt's production of *Sumûrun* a few years ago may have made American audiences more or less familiar with it.

Much connected with the Japanese stage passes over the head of the foreigner, but certainly the beauty and astonishing perfection of the stage settings are manifest to everyone. The wonderful color effects and the elaboration of detail are apt to obscure the prime factor of settings, however—absolute historical accuracy. Recently Kawakami, better

known as the actress Sada Yakko's husband, was sent to Korea to study costumes and scenery for a certain historic production put on at the *Yuraku-za*, and was allowed 10,000 yen, equivalent to as many dollars, for the setting alone. It is very common to reproduce famous scenic places—the Nikko Temples, Mukojima on a snowy winter night showing the Sumida river with the houses on the opposite bank, among which, perhaps, a realistic fire breaks out; the Sanjo Bridge in Kyoto, with people coming and going in picturesque confusion, carrying their soft oiled-paper lanterns; famous tombs, or points of pilgrimage. Above all, the beautiful interiors of the daimios' palaces that one sees on the stage linger hauntingly in the memory. For eleven generations members of the Hasegawa family have been the chief scene painters of the country, holding the right by some curious feudal tradition. In their settings, it is always the background that produces the atmosphere of the play, for, as in actual life, the houses are almost empty—a lacquer arm rest, perhaps,—a smoking box, one or two lanterns standing in the corner, and very little more. The effect of simplicity is thus produced, at the same time that artistic richness of setting makes itself felt. The perfection of detail which is the keynote of Japanese art, excluding the color prints which depend rather on symbolism, removes the Japanese stage setting from any close relationship with the "new stagecraft" of the western world.

The following passage taken from a volume on oriental drama by Alfred Bates illustrates the possibilities of an advanced realism in the Japanese stage:

"Worthy of special mention is a scene at the *Shintomi-za* Theater in Tokyo, which recently held

the audience spellbound for many minutes, and yet for the most of the time there was no one visible on the stage and no change of setting.

"It was a swamp. In the foreground was a tumble-down hut of temporary make, containing a tripod of sticks with a suspended kettle over a spent fire. The rest of the stage was filled to its full depth with the real rushes found in the native swamps, standing upright, and with reeds, trees, and grass, all real also. Perfect silence reigned, which became almost painful in its intensity. Then a distant frog croaked and was answered from another part of the marsh. This was several times repeated with wonderful imitation of reality. The leaves of the farther trees rustled as they were shaken in the wind, and the nearer rushes swayed before it. Then far off was heard the cry of a bird whose cry betokens rain. Nearer and nearer came the sound, and the birds, flying swiftly, crossed the stage like a flash, low, almost among the waving reeds. A slow darkening, a few puffs of wind, a rustle of the reeds and leaves, and patter, patter came the rain drops, water unmistakable, pouring and splashing down between the audience and the dim grey background. A woman entered with a dripping umbrella and high-tucked kimono, followed soon after by a man with drawn knife. Then the attack, the struggle, and the disappearance of both into the swamp. Then the awful death-hunt in and about and among the rushes, which bent and swayed and hid all but the fierce sounds of the hidden fight for life. The fearful realism of the whole scene and its consummate art were indescribable."

Realism, however, is not always the keynote of scenic effect. The ancient black and white velvet horse, with the very human knees and the sandal-

shod hoofs, did service on the stage for centuries. What countless daimios have ridden out over their castle moats on this trusty charger, bound on missions of state! How many warriors terrible to look upon have galloped off to war on the little velvet steed half as big as themselves! It was not until 1912 that the first real horse appeared in a Japanese theater, almost creating a panic as it stepped gingerly onto the boards and shied at the orchestra. And there were those among the audience who rather mourned the innovation. Suggestion also plays a delicate part in stage settings. In one play, the young hero lies dying inside a hut of thatch on the outskirts of a small village. The members of his family assemble, and one by one go into the hut. There is a long pause in which the stage remains quite empty, and then a few petals, as if shaken by an unseen wind, fall lightly from a cherry tree just outside the door. There is a favorite poem in Japan, "The *samurai* gives up his life as easily for his lord as a cherry petal falls from a tree," and the transiency of human life is always symbolized by the cherry blossoms, or by the dew drops, in Japan. A Japanese audience does not need to be told that the young hero is dead. The background of the Japanese drama—in color, in atmosphere, in symbolism,—is as suggestive as the drama itself.

GERTRUDE EMERSON.

The following letter and programs received recently by THE DRAMA have been of such interest to the editor that he ventures, without permission from the author, to reproduce them for the readers of the magazine.

THE DRAMA has always been given warm support abroad, especially in England, France, and Germany, and the reviews given to it there have shown a stimulating appreciation of its aims. The letter below is but one example of a large foreign correspondence which has been a rich encouragement to those in editorial charge.

The programs—others devoted to Ibsen, Greek tragedy and the like are not reproduced—are peculiarly informative as to the vital relations of the arts to life in foreign civilizations. One can hardly believe that American soldiers, prisoners of war, would devote their time to productions of Maeterlinck and Strindberg, or to lectures on art.

T. B. H.

KRIEGSGEFANGENENSENDUNG.

Absender: Leigh Henry, Barrack 3, Box 10.

Ruhleben, April 31, 1916.

To the Editor of THE DRAMA.

Dear Sir.—Enclosed you will find the printed program of the Ruhleben Camp Shakespeare Tercentenary Festival, which has just come to a close. I send it as a souvenir which I imagine may interest you and at the same time prove a remembrance from one whose interest in both drama and THE DRAMA persists in spite of the present unhappy conditions. As you will see, the program of the festival was designed to be as comprehensive and informative as possible under the circumstances. The first event, *Twelfth Night*, was produced under the direction of M. Cecil Duncan-Jones, to whom we owe the first production of Shakespeare in the camp, the performances of *As You Like It*, given here last June.

M. Duncan-Jones' production was distinguished by a thoroughness of preparation, a subtlety of insight, and an individuality of conception which mark him as possessing the qualities of a true artist. No detail, no matter how elusive or small, escaped him; every mood and character of the play was interpreted with a penetration which revealed the utmost of its significance. Yet nothing obtruded to destroy the complete unity of the work as a whole, nor was anything emphasized in such manner as to obscure its spontaneity. Throughout, an atmosphere of whole-hearted merriment and gaiety evinced the strong human feeling and sympathy of the producer, a feeling with which he succeeded in imbuing the whole of his cast. The music, composed specially for the occasion by Edgar L. Bainton, gave an additional interest to the production, and, while occasionally somewhat reminiscent, had moments of considerable beauty. The setting of the song *Come Away, Death* was perhaps the finest of these, reminding one, in its simplicity and directness, and the richness of its harmonic material, of earlier works by Bainton, such as his settings of poems by Gordon Bottomley and Ezra Pound's *Song of the Virgin Mother*. The orchestration throughout was excellent, and the music as a whole reflected much of the spirit of Elizabethan folk-melody, conveyed through the medium of the most evolved modern harmonic combinations and rhythmic devices. The scenic setting and costumes, designed, as those for *As You Like It* by myself, were purely impressionist in conception, fantaisiste in mood. No attempt at realism was made; all that was possible in the way of stimulus to the imagination was attempted, both Duncan-Jones and myself being bitterly opposed to the concentration on petty external details which obsess the

“realist,” who, in complexity more often than not surrenders reality for realism. Moreover, a thing such as the mood of spring joy which permeates *Twelfth Night* is a thing not intellectual, but emotional and spiritual, and can be comprehended only through the spiritual sensibility. To obtain this, sympathy must be established between the actors and the audience, and everything in the nature of scenic decoration and design, costume, lighting, etc., must combine to produce it. With this object in view I designed the setting for *Twelfth Night*. The fantasy of the costumes I intended to aid the whimsicality of the piece, and conduce to imaginative interpretation by establishing an absolutely unfamiliar atmosphere, thus avoiding associations of thought which might be irrelevant. For the scenes three sets of curtains were employed, two sets of screens, one small frame-piece, used with light behind in silhouette and painted, as were the screens, in flat, neutral tints to take light. With these and a few extra pieces, arches (2), steps, lamps, etc., the whole setting was contrived, lighting playing the most important part in the scenic effect. Naturally painted cloths were absent, thus removing a hideous element which has done much to ruin dramatic art.

The *Othello*, produced by Herr Hopkirk, an actor from a German provincial theatre, whose knowledge of English is limited, was staged in as realistic a manner as possible, with painted cloth-scenes, frame cloths, and built pieces. The rendering was traditional, in the German Hoftheatre manner, *Othello* being treated as a “star” part, all the other characters being subordinated, with many cuts.

In the concert the most interesting items were the arrangements of English folk-songs for male chorus, sung by the Ruhleben Madrigal Society. The

overture to *Coriolanus* was heard to more advantage later at the *Othello* performances, under the baton of B. J. Dale, who is not given to posturing or mannerisms. Several of the Elizabethan Love Songs arranged and sung as well as usual by F. Keel, were interesting, though many presented a sameness of mood, melodic idea, and harmonic material. The dances from *Henry VIII* were vigorously conducted by Mr. E. L. Bainton. Of the lectures those by Messrs. Marshall and Pease proved most interesting. . . . The pleasant frontispiece of the program is by H. Egremont, an artist and architect interned here. The production of *Twelfth Night* has gained enthusiastic approval in the camp as a whole, and was certainly the most generally appreciated item in the program.

Our thanks are due, and are heartily accorded, to Dr. Lechmere, who made the costumes for *Twelfth Night*, as he did those for the production of *As You Like It* last year. The dresses for *Othello* were hired, by Herr Hopkirk's desire, from Berlin. Otherwise all the scenic work, including the making of properties, was done by interned civilians in the camp.

With all hopes for the prosperity of drama and
THE DRAMA,

LEIGH HENBY,

Late Director of Music, School for the Art of
the Theatre, Florence, Italy.

P. S. I enclose also some programs of the work done here by members of the Ruhleben Arts and Science Union, a body of young men who stand for things stimulative, creative and expressive, with an especial love for things modern.

L. H.

MAETERLINCK AS DRAMATIST

BUHLSEN Monday

November 22nd 6 p.m.

LECTURE by R. HERDMAN PENDER

with Dramatic Illustrations in costume
prepared by LEON HENRY.

PROGRAMME.

I. LECTURE

R. Herdman Pender.

II. PELLEAS AND MELISANDA, ACT III. Sc., 3.

Pelleas

J. A. West.

Melisanda

J. Z. G. Burgoyne.

Goland

G. Merritt.

III. Introductory Remarks to "INTERIOR."

IV. INTERIOR.

Speaking Characters.

An Old Man
A Stranger
Mary
Martha
A Peasant
Members of a Crowd

H. Stafford Hatfield.
D. Fives.
J. A. West.
J. Z. G. Burgoyne.
G. Merritt.
Messrs. Govett, Curtis,
Reynolds, Thomson.

Silent Characters.

The Father
The Mother
The Two Sisters
A Child

Horace Hunt.
A. Archibald Welland.
G. Morrison & A. Parr.

V. Introductory Remarks to "TINTAGILES."

VI. TINTAGILES, Act V.


Characters.

Igraine
Tintagiles (not seen)

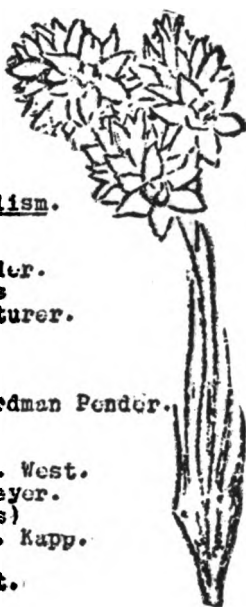
J. A. West.
J. Z. G. Burgoyne.

Enclosure Prisoner of War letter addressed to THE DRAMA,
Marquette Buildings, 736, Chicago, United States of America.



	ARTS AND SCIENCE UNION.																																			
	RUHLBEN.																																			
	<p>Lecture by N.G. KAPP. on THE DRAMA AS A WORK OF ART.</p> <p>*****</p> <p><u>DRAMATIC ILLUSTRATIONS:-</u></p> <p>1. <u>BELOW THE SURFACE</u>, a symbolic play by N.G. Kapp.</p> <table><tr><td>Characters:</td><td>Surveyor</td><td>Wigg.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Miner</td><td>Pearce.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Foreman</td><td>E.E. West.</td></tr></table> <p>Scene: The gallery of a coal-mine.</p> <hr/> <p>11. <u>MAJOR BARBARA</u>, Act 11 Bernard Shaw.</p> <table><tr><td>Characters:</td><td>Major Barbara Kaufmann.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Jennie Hill Zweigenhaft.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Rumple Mitchins F.E. West.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Peter Shirley Browne.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Snobbie Price Percy Maurice.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Bill Walker Merritt.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Adolfus Cusins Wigg.</td></tr></table> <p>Scene: A Salvation Army Shelter.</p> <hr/> <p>111. <u>LITTLE EYOLF</u>,.....Henrik Ibsen.</p> <table><tr><td>Characters:</td><td>Rita</td><td>J.A. West.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Allmers</td><td>W.A.C. Meyer.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Asta</td><td>Burgoyne</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Borghain</td><td>Wigg.</td></tr></table> <p>Scene: Living room in Allmers' house in Norway.</p>	Characters:	Surveyor	Wigg.		Miner	Pearce.		Foreman	E.E. West.	Characters:	Major Barbara Kaufmann.		Jennie Hill Zweigenhaft.		Rumple Mitchins F.E. West.		Peter Shirley Browne.		Snobbie Price Percy Maurice.		Bill Walker Merritt.		Adolfus Cusins Wigg.	Characters:	Rita	J.A. West.		Allmers	W.A.C. Meyer.		Asta	Burgoyne		Borghain	Wigg.
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closure, Prisoner of War letter, addressed to THE DRAMA, Marquette Bldg, 736,
Chicago, United States of America.



ARTS & SCIENCE UNION.

Stindberg and Dramatic Realism.

Lecture by R. Hordman Pender.
with Dramatic Illustrations
prepared by Leigh Henry and lecturer.

P R O G R A M M E

I. L e c t u r e R. Hordman Pender.

II. S i m o o n

BISKRA (an Arab girl)..... J. A. West.
YUSUF (her lover)..... W. Meyer.
GUIMAN (a lieutenant of Zouaves)
..... N. G. Kapp.

SCENE: Algeria. TIME: Present.

+++INTERVAL+++

III. T h o S t r o n g e r

MRS. X. (an actress, married) J. E. G. Burgoyne.
MISS Y. (an actress, unmarried) J. A. West.

IV. G r e d i t o r s

TERLA..... J. A. West.
ADOLPH (her husband, painter) H. Stafford Hatfield.
GUSTAV (her divorced husband)
(high-school teacher,
travelling).... N. G. Kapp.

Programme printed by the Education D.pt. Printing Works. S.



—
R. H. LEREN
JAN. 17, 1916
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THE SELECTIVE PROCESS AND THE STAR.



O those of us who are of that vast army who must follow leaders in the world of thought and of art, certain watch-words and certain war-cries are imparted. We are given to mumbling the first to sentinels at the outposts, if ours be the quiet type of minds, content with mumblings.

If, on the other hand, we feel the need for more vital expression, we shriek the latter cries with the best of them, and seldom do we stop longer than to gain the necessary breath to keep on shrieking. Perhaps if we did stop, we might think, and, thinking, doubt whether after all we really meant what these shibboleths of ours seemed to indicate.

For a number of years the present writer has been among those who swell the chorus of outcries when dramatic critics of note voice their slogan of "Down with the Star System! Away with the Stars! Give us a Repertory Theater. Give us Stock Companies. Give us a National Drama."

When people decried the star, and accused him or her of absorbing the condensed rays of the calcium, and continually preempting the geometrical center of the stage, abject agreement seemed to be the obvious action. The state of things theatrical seemed greatly to be deplored. A change was to be hoped for. If talking could hurry on such a change, by all means let us talk.

The talk naturally started among the dramatic critics, and spread among the laity. There is prob-

ably no class of beings, not even the clergy, to whose opinions people are more rankly subservient than to those of dramatic critics. Especially is this true of the body from which the greatest number of theatergoers is to be counted on, the women. Why the critics are invested with a reputation for almost superhuman insight by the (once) weaker sex is a mystery. The opinion of man in general on things dramatic, the average woman seems to hold in large contempt. Once tack the name "dramatic critic" to the merest young college or high school graduate, and he becomes a menace to the sane judgments of the sex.

It is only lately that an honest doubt has begun to creep into the mind of the writer, as to whether, in the present great change which is sweeping over the drama, we are not losing more than we gain. Along with the socializing of all other forms of life and expression, the drama is receiving its share. Individuality would seem to be threatened in much of the work presented to us. The impression left by many of the new plays is of a general idea in the mass, but with the individual presentations blurred. Is this true to life?

As we look back through our own personal experiences we find in the varied domestic dramas in which each one of us plays a part, that there is always a star role. Even a dinner party which is worth going to boasts a lion. In each drawing-room, if we analyze our impression, there is one luminous personality which outshines the others. Each of the events of life as we go over it in retrospect centers about some one character. How different the denouement in certain episodes of the past had not A or B acted as he did! C, D and E were present, it is true. They remain faintly imaged in our memories, but A

shone resplendent! The episode was distinctly the episode of A!

There is in the mind a selective process so determined, and so instantaneous, that among the faces in an audience, the passengers in a train, or even the loiterers on a street corner, certain persons seem to detach themselves from their surroundings. It is just as to the eye trained to find four-leaved clovers, those little harbingers of luck seem to leap forth and beckon from among their less noteworthy three-leaved brethren.

Why, then, should we deny to our stage, which, if it is worth anything at all, must portray life as it is, the right to depict it truthfully? The audience is a myriad-minded unity composed of your consciousness and mine and many others, merged mysteriously for an hour or two into one. The dramatist has given for our study or amusement a slice of life in which certain characters must enlist our sympathies. However painstakingly he writes in the other parts, it seems impossible to prevent certain ones from absorbing the attention and good-will of the audience more fully than the rest. Since they do so, why not grant the acting of such roles to those more experienced or more gifted actors to whom we apply the term "stars"?

In the world of pictures we find an analogous state of things. We all know the group paintings where dozens of people are represented with faithful attention to detail, each face a carefully worked out portrait. Hundreds of historical paintings of great national events, painted to please some patron or fulfil an order, have been of this character. They are interesting historically just as a genealogical tree is interesting. They are no more pictures in the artistic sense than is the genealogical tree literature. In

a great group picture, although it may represent a multitude, there is always some dominant figure to which the others are subdued. When genealogy merges into history, certain individuals begin to leap forth from the pages and assume rightful prominence.

The writer believes that if we are quite candid with ourselves we find that in a stock company, in a repertory theater, we unconsciously "star" certain of the actors. We have recently had opportunities to study the Manchester, Abbey, and Stratford players. They have certainly been received more than kindly by the patrons of the drama who class themselves (we hope rightly) as among the discerning in things literary and dramatic. We are not quite far enough from the glamour—no! Let us be honest! Was there any glamour?—from the influence, then, of these productions to compare them dispassionately with other plays and players of the past. We are somewhat in the position of a child who has cried persistently for a certain toy. Later on the novelty of the new toy which has been granted to him has become exhausted, and he is found playing with the old toy again. This may or may not happen with us. It is too soon to tell.

To me it seems as though already the impressions made by most of these plays are less distinct than those left by certain of the plays given under the much derided star system. For example, the presentation of *Man and Superman* is already far more hazy in the writer's mind than is *Arms and the Man*, seen many years before but rendered immortal by the genius of Richard Mansfield. Naturally, the quality of the play decides its treatment. *Pomander Walk* does very well with a stock company, but one cannot imagine *Disraeli* without George Arliss, or

an equally strong personality in the name-part. Even such plays as *The Blue Bird* can be produced by a good stock company, but *The Pied Piper* would be nothing without the whimsical compelling charm which the title rôle demands of its star.

Musical people have been known to regard the intrusion of a soloist in an orchestral concert as a species of musical heresy, yet the thousands will throng to hear the soloist where only hundreds gather for the orchestra alone. Granted that the hundreds are extremely discriminating, are the thousands merely curious? Or are they unconsciously responding to that selective impulse which bids us center our forces of mind and of heart on an individual rather than on a group? The pathetic efforts of the girl in the chorus to differentiate herself in some way from her mates even by an oddity of manner or clothes is not entirely vanity. She is responding to this very selective quality in its lower manifestations in the minds of the audience.

In considering the merits of a repertory company, is there not danger of dwarfing the personality of truly great actors by demanding too much versatility of impersonation in their work? Whatever charm each of us possesses for friends in the home circle consists in the special way in which we play our parts as *ourselves*. John Smith and Mary Jones, if they can at will assume all the characteristics of John Jones or Mary Smith, must lose something in the process. It is the people who are individual, unusual, that we remember. People that belong to types are the more easily forgotten as they are true to their type. Divergence is a charm. It is personalities that achieve immortality, not groups. A group survives in history only when it surrounds some vital personality. Pepys may have been

“pleased not at all with the company acting at the King’s Playhouse,” but the company is not quite forgotten, since it was with them that “Poor Nellie” played!

Once in each generation comes a great impersonation which crystallizes into an ideal in the mind of an onlooker. To those who can even dimly remember the elder Salvini as Lear, there need never be another. He *was* Lear. Would he have been any finer or more compelling had he surrounded himself with a company of men players, each one of whom was capable of playing more or less acceptably the part of Lear? Who knows now, or cares about those others? What matters it who played Rosencranz when Edwin Booth was Hamlet. What did Bassanio matter when Henry Irving played Shylock, and the magic lips of Ellen Terry sounded the immortal plea for mercy? (Unless, as indeed often happens, the Rosencranz and Bassanio of yesterday have become the Hamlet and Shylock of today!)

Joseph Jefferson occasionally acted other parts, but in *Rip Van Winkle* he established a tradition as sacred as Santa Claus among three generations of American children. Denman Thompson portrayed Josh Whitcomb for thirty odd years. His name is never heard except in connection with that of the dear old Yankee, who taught a wholesome lesson against intemperance, dishonesty and unchastity long before Ibsen, Brieux and the others of their ilk had their day.

Strangely enough men seem more willing to submerge their personality completely in one part than women do. Perhaps women have not developed quite such distinctly individual natures as men. Life calls upon them to play shifting and changing parts even on the secluded stage of home. Great women

stars often object profoundly to becoming identified with certain roles. Still, when thinking of any great actress, special characterizations of hers always flash into the memory. Mrs. Fiske, although seen in many rôles, will always rule supreme as Becky Sharp, while Julia Marlowe, lovely in any part, was absolutely vital and compelling as Viola in *Twelfth Night*.

Do not let us, in our desire for justice and fairness, belittle the value of the vivid impression. After all is said, a dramatic production is something more than a well-oiled smooth-running machine with interchangeable parts. That pervasive, pestilential word "Efficiency" must not crowd out the older, finer word "Inspiration."

The well-balanced production may fill us with a great satisfaction, but will it produce that thrill to the imagination which, to youth at least, is so stimulative, and for which youth instinctively seeks?

In a complex age, we are pitifully afraid of our own enthusiasms, lest we be dubbed "simple." An enthusiasm is a limitation, and a limitation in our modern vocabulary is an equivalent for one of the seven deadly sins. Since the selective process produces enthusiasm, we strive in all our criticisms to suppress its manifestations. In our efforts to do away with the star, may we not cripple this function of the mind till, in things dramatic at least, it atrophies and dies? The question seems worth considering.

ANNE HIGGINSON SPIGEE.

ACTORS TO UNIONIZE.



THE Actors' Equity Association has voted in favor of affiliation with the American Federation of Labor. This statement probably carries with it little or no significance to the general public. Its import, however, is considerable, for it means that practically all of the leading legitimate players on the American stage are to become identified with the union labor movement.

It is true that the introduction of the trades union into the theatre is by no means new. The initial movement in this direction has long since been accomplished by the unionizing of the musicians, the stage hands, and certain of the vaudeville performers. But this is the first successful attempt to organize the artistic forces of the legitimate stage. Furthermore, this is no freakish whim of a small minority of the actors and actresses, if the large and overwhelming vote for affiliation is any indication of the prevailing sentiment in the profession. Hereafter, in advancing their claims the actors will have at all times the support of the 2,500,000 other members of the American Federation of Labor.

A word regarding the Association may not be amiss at this point. Some four years ago—in May, 1912, to be exact—a group of actors, highly representative of the dramatic profession, seeing the need of an organization to protect the player, met and formed the Actors' Equity Association. From its inception the prime purpose of this body has been to establish more harmonious and equitable relations

between actor and manager. This vigorous agency for the actor's protection has steadily broadened and deepened its sphere of influence, until today it has a membership of nearly three thousand, embracing the greater part of the noted dramatic artists in this country. In the four years of its existence it has achieved an enviable reputation for honesty and fair dealing, while upholding the dignity of acting as an art. It has served as intermediary between actor and manager, it has settled disputes, and it has rectified a number of abuses; but its *raison d'être*, as it were,—the general adoption of its "equitable contract"—remains unfulfilled. It is the better to achieve this that affiliation with the American Federation of Labor has been undertaken.

The Actors' Equity Association is not to lose its autonomy. It will continue, as heretofore, to be a self-governing body, with officers chosen from its own membership and with complete mastery over its internal affairs. Apart from its obligations to subscribe to existing and future laws governing the American Federation, it will enjoy absolute independence. Of course, as for future laws of the national body, the actors themselves will have a voice in the making of those. A large majority of the theatrical managers seem to look upon this action by the actors with equanimity. Upon the face of it, the dramatic profession has nothing to lose and everything to gain by this latest move.

The demands which the Association hopes to obtain with the influence of organized labor behind it are mild indeed, and have been framed in a spirit of fairness and equity to both parties. There are seven major provisions for which the actors are contending: a curtailment of the unpaid rehearsal period and a guarantee of two weeks' salary; pay-

ment of the actor's transportation from New York and return; the reëstablishment of the two-weeks-notice clause; compensation for the player who rehearses more than a week and then is discharged; payment for all extra performances; full salaries for all weeks played; and a proper adjustment with regard to the supplying of women's gowns.

With regard to the first provision. Oftentimes theatrical companies rehearse for as much as six weeks without salary, only to have the production withdrawn at the end of the first week of its run. To prevent this injustice to the actor, the Equity Association would set a definite limit of four weeks to the rehearsal period without pay, with the further stipulation that the players be guaranteed a run of at least two weeks, and that for every additional week of rehearsal beyond the allotted four there should be a week with salary. Perhaps it should be explained, for the enlightenment of the layman, that companies are paid only for performances actually given.

The rearrangement with regard to railroad fare aims to prevent the stranding of actors without funds and without employment hundreds of miles from New York. The Association avers that such cases as these are not uncommon. The third demand of the Equity Association, that all actors be given two weeks' notice of the closing of their companies, is the reassertion of an old custom fallen into disuse. At the present time even first-class productions close with scant warning to the players acting in them. The fourth claim aims to meet the situation, frequently arising, where an actor rehearses a part for several weeks—sometimes even up to the time of final rehearsals—and then is discharged from the cast, through no fault of his own, without having

received a dollar. It is manifestly unfair to ask the actor who is subject to so many uncertainties to give weeks of his time to no purpose whatsoever, and the Equity Association calls upon the manager to pay such an actor for the services he has rendered.

It is the custom in theatres today for musicians and stage hands to receive extra pay for additional performances, but unless some express provision is made to the contrary, actors are expected to work on such occasions without added compensation. The fifth contention, then, for which the actors are fighting is a special clause in all contracts stating that all extra performances except holiday matinees shall be paid for pro rata. It has also long been a theatrical custom to cut performers' salaries in half the weeks preceding Easter and Christmas, owing to the general slump in business which occurs at those times. The unionized stage hands and musicians do not suffer any such reduction, and the actors now demand that full salaries be paid them for all weeks played.

The final contention of the actors for a proper adjustment with regard to the furnishing of women's costumes arises through the fact that it is not uncommon for actresses to purchase costly wardrobes for which they have no possible use after the play has run its course. When a play does not last longer than a week it requires a handsome salary for the actress to get any return on her investment whatsoever.

It is especially significant that the salary question does not enter into this controversy. That is a matter left for settlement between the individual actor and the manager. No attempt is to be made to grade actors. It is the conditions governing his livelihood which the player desires to remedy.

Certain of the managers—Corey, Williams & Riter, Inc., Oliver Morosco, A. H. Woods, and the actor-managers—already use the Equity's form of contract, but they are in the minority. Other producers remain more or less obdurate in their opposition. The powerful firm of Klaw & Erlanger, however, has voluntarily granted the provision for full salary for all weeks played, and their move is deemed significant of the proper attitude of other of the managers. But at present writing the bulk of the actors' demands remain unfulfilled. The Actors' Equity Association ascribes its failure to its inability to bring sufficient pressure to bear upon the managers. The governing board or Council admits it is powerless to control its own membership and force the players to act as a unit. It is to obviate this difficulty that the Council of the Association has advocated affiliation with the American Federation of Labor. Now the fusion of the legitimate players of the American stage with organized labor is about to become a reality.

The action which has been taken by the dramatic profession is the direct, logical outcome of the formation of the "Theatrical Trust" more than twenty years ago. Throughout the past two decades the domain of the theatre has been a veritable sea of unrest. In that time the business side of the stage has been metamorphosed from a group of theatres having no direct relation to one another into a highly organized and centralized machine attendant upon the will of a few influential men—the booking powers. The attempt to create a monopoly failed of its mark, but the theatrical managers in the rival camps have become firmly entrenched, and it would be a venturesome person indeed who would defy them single-handed and alone. When American theatrical mana-

gers felt the urge of the seemingly resistless current towards combination and organized to control the playhouses, the artists should have taken heed and banded together for mutual protection, but they did not.

Organization unopposed grows arrogant and merciless in its power. With the organization of the managers, the unprotected actors became a prey to superior force. What could they do as individuals against a powerful array of the money powers? It is but natural that abuses should have crept in, and in such a field as the stage, with its constantly shifting conditions and many hazards, it has not always been easy for the player to fight the offending manager. Petty extortions have been exacted by the less scrupulous, and what at first were merely exceptions have become the rule. In the sharp competition between the managers themselves, the reputable firms have been forced to adopt the methods of the less honorable, in sheer self-defense. Petty quarrels and jealousies among players must merge in the larger controversy. It takes organization to combat organization, power to defeat power. The artist has clung too long to the efficacy of individual effort, but he is now awake to the weakness of his position and he is striving to remedy it.

The actor has apparently ignored the fact until now that this is an age of collective action. Only to his seeming blindness to this principle can the unfortunate plight of the actor be ascribed. The writer does not mean to infer that all members of the dramatic profession are downtrodden, for they are not. Never was the social position of leading players higher, never were the financial rewards or the public adulation more lavish than today. Yet, despite this unquestionable betterment of conditions for the few, the actor as a class has lagged behind.

Has the actor become less vital to the dramatic structure? Not at all. But he has remained serenely oblivious to the change in his economic position. There was a time when the artistic forces were in the ascendancy in the theatre. The actor formerly was frequently his own manager. He engaged his own casts, he staged his plays and did his own booking. Today these activities are performed by as many different people. Conditions have changed, but—because he has been blind to his own interests—not wholly to the advantage of the actor.

It is not that the various artistic branches necessary to the performance of dramatic art are no longer coördinate in significance and in value. This remains as true as ever it was. Without the dramatist, the actor would lack his medium of expression; without the actor, the dramatist would never see his characters clothed in the personalities of living men and women. In either case there would be no theatre as we know it. With the advent of "the production" in which scenery plays an indispensable part, the producer and scene designer become vital elements. Eliminate them, and the public of modern times probably could not be induced to enter a playhouse. But without funds, where would any of them be? The economic factor in the situation looms big with portent.

The point I would make is that the player—barring our little coterie of actor-managers—does not bear the financial responsibility of the theatrical production in which he appears. The manager is the employer, the actor the employe. Inasmuch as this is true, those players who do not sponsor their own production must accept the conditions governing employes.

Some players have fattened their pocketbooks at the expense of their prestige, while a vastly greater number lack money as well. Where formerly the actor was the very heart of the dramatic circle, he now all too frequently clings to a precarious position on the edge of the circumference. The player has lost his position as a responsible individual, and it was the organization of the dramatic world into a vast speculative business which marked the passage of the actor from this pivotal position. The field has widened, to be sure. Actors have increased in number, and so have the actor-managers, but not in proportion to the number and importance of the theatrical managers. It is the business man of the stage who is now the mainspring of the theatrical machine.

Different times, different manners. When the dramatic field was composed of individuals acting as such, the player, even though he were not his own manager, was able to bargain for fair and equal terms. But a free field for individual action does not obtain today except in the case of a few players of exalted rank. At last, however, the actor is taking the course which, it would seem, will enable him to rise once more to a place of affluence and power, perhaps to enjoy a security he has never known before. The actor has finally come to appraise the principle of collective action at its true value, and it is the Actors' Equity Association which is leading the way.

But every class of employe has not entered the ranks of organized labor. What considerations obtain to urge some to join and to deter others? The size of the field of activity, the organization of the employers, the concentration of the financial control into the hands of a few, and a large mobile supply

of labor, things which have already been mentioned, are largely influential.

The man who is one of a comparatively small group of workers, who clings to a single employer and who is in close contact with him, rarely needs the protection of the labor union. Such a man is usually in a way to obtain advancement on merit and eventually to become a member of the employing class. The average actor is in almost direct contrast to such a man. He is one of thousands, and he is constantly changing from one management to another as the needs of the moment demand. Close and intimate association with his employer is the privilege only of the exceptional actor. The actor's calling is subject to many uncertainties wholly alien to men in other pursuits. As our theatres are run today, the game he is playing is at best a gamble. There is no endowed theatre to give players permanent engagements such as the *Comedie Française* offers French actors and actresses, or the state theatres offer members of the profession in Germany. With managers ever on the search for types, the player's chance of securing an engagement is reduced almost to a minimum. Few workers are subject to such fictitious standards of value as the actor. Added to his other difficulties are the whims and dictates of the fashionable world. Today he is on the high tide of popularity; to see him is eminently "the thing to do"; he is the fad of the moment. But tomorrow a capricious public, ever in quest of novelties will pass him by to worship at the feet of some new idol.

Unlike other artists, the actor is bound up in his art. Physically and mentally he is a part of his own creation. Furthermore, he is dependent upon the presence of his fellow players at all times. But if

these conditions govern the player, they also govern the manager. Without the actor there can be no performance. The actor cannot be robbed of this asset, and its value is not to be minimized. It will not be necessary for the Actors' Equity Association to gain the support of every actor and actress in order to control the situation, but it must secure and retain the unquestioned loyalty of the vast majority of the competent members of the dramatic profession. The principle of the closed or union shop is not at present an issue; it is merely a weapon to be used in dire necessity.

But with the bulk of the capable actors and actresses organized, moral force should prove sufficient to attain victory in the present campaign, and for a very good reason. The stage exploits only skilled labor (if such a term may be applied to an art). To make his wares salable, the manager finds that personality, skill, and renown are qualities absolutely essential in the player. The dramatic profession has little to fear from competition by the inexpert and the novice. Instances to the contrary notwithstanding, the art of acting is most difficult to acquire. Even where it seems to bloom almost instantly, it is usually latent ability waiting for an opportunity. The true actor is not made in a day or in a year. Successful practice of the art demands long and arduous training, and the mellow, well-rounded artist is the product only of a lifetime.

With the competent players organized and able to enforce their demands, the recalcitrant manager would be reduced to the novice or the inexpert player for the selection of his casts. Such a manager would find only two courses open to him. He could engage this raw material or the inexpert non-union actors and give performances at lowered charges of admis-

sion. But to what end would this be? The public is interested in stars and genuine artistry. It does not wish to see a good play badly acted, much less a poor one. The manager's only alternative to this would be to go out of business. Neither aspect is an especially alluring one.

From the point of view of the individual player, the necessity for union action will seem great or small, according to the strength of the player's position. A Sothorn, a Caruso, or a Mary Pickford can not only safely bargain but can even dictate terms. It is the small and relatively unimportant player who will receive the chief benefit from the alliance with labor, and it has been to aid the great mass of their profession that a number of the leading players on the American stage have given unselfishly of their time and energy to promote this movement.

But it is highly significant, perhaps, that while the rank and file are heart and soul in the fight, there are few actor-managers or stars of long established reputation who openly champion affiliation. Some of these have expressed themselves forcibly against the alliance, while others have been silent altogether. It will be interesting to watch further developments. Should the principal dramatic stars remain without, while the body of the profession enters the fold, a curious condition of affairs might arise, should the Equity Association for any reason decide to enforce the closed shop.

The Actors' Equity Association, clothed with real power, can confer dignity and stability upon the whole dramatic profession, if it will. The learned professions are standardized,—why not the dramatic profession? Mind you, I do not speak of grading players within the ranks. The stage—and, for the matter of that, any art—is a field which can never

be made uniform as to the quantity and quality of its personnel. But surely much can be done to set apart the true actor from the mere pretender. The lawyer, the clergyman, and the physician must prove their competence before being allowed to practice. Steps should be taken to have the actor prove his fitness.

Too frequently physical qualifications are the sole claim players can press in defense of adopting their profession. Such as these cannot lay true claim to being artists, and their presence is only a menace to the reputation of worthy players. Just how many incompetent actors and actresses have been foisted on an unsuspecting public, theatrical managers are learning to their sorrow in failure after failure of their road companies.

The Equity Association has a rule whereby only those with two years' experience upon the professional stage are eligible for membership. This is an excellent provision and safeguard. Two years' experience is not an absolute guarantee of efficiency, to be sure, but it very definitely lessens the chances of inefficiency. It accomplishes this much. It prevents the stamp of approval from being meted out to the ambitious tyro with overmuch ardor and less capability. But of course care must be taken not to obstruct the pathway for genius and talent. Encouragement of a substantial kind should be given the man or woman with the proper equipment who seriously desires to embark upon a professional career. Some such provision as the issuing of apprentice memberships for a probationary period should be made. It is absolutely vital that the Equity Association maintain a high level in its personnel, for no body of men and women democratically organized can hope to rise for long above the average of its own constituency.

There are those, perhaps, who, judging the labor movement in the light of history or of past experience, view with alarm the introduction of trade union methods and principles into the domain of art. The record of labor has not been blameless. Unreasonable demands have sometimes been made, and less worthy methods employed to gain them. But what great movement in all history, involving human passions and desires, has been without spot or stain? It would be the height of absurdity at this late day to condemn organized labor, which has done so much to uplift the American workingman. Strife between artist and manager in a field where harmony is an essential would be deplorable. But strife and unionism are not synonymous. If history has proved the contrary, it has also demonstrated that many groups under the leadership of the American Federation of Labor are guided by sanity and wisdom. Will the actors follow this latter example? Much depends upon the future attitude and actions of the theatrical managers; still more depends upon the actors themselves.

Those managers who hastily set up the hysterical cry that the unionizing of actors will work ruin to the stage only reveal the selfish weakness of their own position. Their motives become as transparent as their arguments are untenable. Such men in their heart of hearts must realize the injustice which has been done the actor. The American Federation of Labor wields vast power, and these managers know it. They fear that if the power of organized labor comes to aid the actor they will be deprived of their unfair advantage. While attempting to fight and discourage the players from making this move, their very actions furnish the most convincing proof that such a step is necessary.

The strike, the boycott, and the closed shop do not have to be exerted to make it patent that organized labor is a tremendous force in American life today. The knowledge that 2,500,000 American citizens are banded together for mutual protection constitutes in itself sufficient moral force to command a fair hearing from employers and even to win their approval of just demands. But if the American Federation has this immense influence, it is because it has within its organization the power to demand self-sacrifice for the good of the many. This leverage comes from putting into action the old doctrine that rights carry obligations with them. The dramatic artist may be called upon when unionized to make sacrifices which will prove irksome to one of his individualistic spirit, but this is a contingency not greatly to be feared.

The American actor in electing to join federated labor has swung wide the door of opportunity. He has the chance to weld the dramatic profession into a unit, to make real the feeling of fraternity which should exist between men and women of like mind and temperament. In so doing he is at last openly acknowledging the principle that it is not what a man does but what he is that matters most. Because of what the player's economic position is, the American Federation of Labor is of value to the actor and the actor to the Federation.

Idle pretension to a position he does not occupy never availed a man anything. Heretofore the actor has not been intellectually honest. He has not faced the facts of life squarely, and he has suffered. Now that he recognizes the fact that he is an employe, he can build for the future securely and well. A strong, vigorous organization of actors under wise leadership and control, dominating yet serving the

profession, can cope with many of the abuses now prevalent as no single individual ever could. It can be the means of improving the tone and morale of the whole stage, for it will maintain an impregnable position; it will hold the balance of power. The Actors' Equity Association, under the able guidance of President Francis Wilson and its Council, is such an organization, and it is blazing a path for the player to achieve a new economic freedom.

CHESTER G. CALDER.

KAKITSUHATA.

BY MOTOKIYO

From the notes of Ernest Fenollosa, finished by
Ezra Pound.

[I am not greatly concerned with the accuracy of this version of *The Play of the Iris*. I have either found or imagined a certain beauty in Ernest Fenollosa's pencil script. In much I have followed it; in one place I have added or transferred a refrain; in places I have used words which seem to me to belong to the emotion though they have perhaps no strict equivalents in the original text. Either Motokiyo or Fenollosa seems to have thought that the old sage Narihira, a man wise as Anacreon, was in his day the incarnation of Apollo or, as they say, of a certain Bosatsu or high spirit. Secondly, that the music of this spirit was known and was called "Kohi" or "Gobusaki's" music.

As Ovid after favour, and after affairs with ladies of the court, was exiled and died among the Gætae, so Narihira seems, after favour, to have left the court and to have written *Ex Ponto*, poems of regret.

In the play a certain priest, given to melancholy, and a kindness for the people of old stories, meets with the spirit of one of Narihira's ladies who has identified herself with the Iris; that is to say, the flowers are the thoughts or the body of her spirit.

She tells him of her past and of Narihira's, and how the music of Gobusaki will lift a man's soul into paradise.

The rest is, I hope, apparent in the play as I have set it.—E. P.]

THE SPIRIT OF IRIS, KAKITSUHATA, masked, wearing
at first a heavy robe of orange, white, and delicate
bluish green.

A PRIEST.

THE CHORUS.

The Scene Is in Mikawa.

[*Four musicians enter and take their places.
Three persons of the chorus enter.*]

PRIEST. I am a priest who travels to see the
sights in many provinces; I have been to Miyako
city and seen all the ward-shrines and places of in-
terest. I will now push on to Togaku; every night

it is a new bed and the old urge of sorrow within me.
 I have gone by Miwo and Owari without stopping,
 and I am come to Mikawa province to see the flowers
 of Katitsuhata in the height of their full season.
 Now the low land is before me, I must go down and
 peer closely upon them.

Time does not stop and spring passes,
 The lightfoot summer comes nigh us,
 The branching trees and the bright unmindful
 grasses

Do not forget their time.
 They take no thought, yet remember
 To show forth their colour in season,
 Now that the bird, Kayodori,
 Sings of the Iris, Kayotobana.

I shall seek the Iris, Kakitsuhata, but the bird sings
 "Kayo, Kayo, pretty, pretty, fine Iris, fine Iris."

SPIRIT. [*Appearing as a girl of the locality.*] Not
 very. What are you doing here in this swamp?

PRIEST. I am a priest on my travels. I think
 these very fine iris. What place is this I am come to?

SPIRIT. Eight Bridges, Yatsubashi of Mikawa, an
 iris plantation. You have the best flowers before
 you, those of the deepest colour as you would see
 if you had any power of feeling.

PRIEST. I can see it quite well; they are, I think,
 the Kakitsuhata iris that are set in an ancient
 legend. Can you tell me who wrote down the words?

SPIRIT. [*Standing by a pillar at the corner of the
 stage.*] In the *Ise Monogatari* you read, "By the
 eight bridges, by the web of the crossing waters in
 Kumoda, the iris come to the full; they flaunt there
 and scatter and wither." And when they laid a
 wager with Narihira, he made an acrostic which
 says, "These flowers brought their court dress from
 China."

PRIEST. Then Narihira came hither? From the far end of Adzuma?

SPIRIT. Here? Yes, and to every other place in the North, the deep North.

PRIEST. Though he went through many a province, what place was nearest his heart?

SPIRIT. This place; Yatsubashi.

PRIEST. Here with the wide-petaled iris
On the low-land of Mikawa.

SPIRIT. Throughout the length and width of his journeys . . .

PRIEST. . . . their color was alive in his thought.

SPIRIT. He was Narihira of old, the man of the stories. . . .

PRIEST. Yet this iris . . .

SPIRIT. [*Still standing by the pillar and bending sideways.*] These very flowers before you . . .

CHORUS. . . . "are not the thing of importance," she would say.

The water by the shore is not shallow.

The man who bound himself to me

Returned times out of mind in his thought

To me and this cobweb of waters.

It was in this fashion he knew her, when he was strange in this place.

SPIRIT. I should speak.

PRIEST. What is it?

SPIRIT. Though this is a very poor place, will you pass the night in my cottage?

PRIEST. Most gladly. I will come after a little.

[*Up to this point the SPIRIT has been disguised, or has appeared to the PRIEST as a simple young girl of the locality. She now leaves her pillar and goes off to the other side of the stage, returning in her true appearance; that is, the great lady beloved of old by Narihira. She wears a black hosiben crest or*

hat, an overdress of gauze, purple with golden flowers, an underdress of glaring orange with green and gold pattern. This shows only a little beneath the great enveloping gauze.]

SPIRIT. [*To her tire-women.*] No, no; this hat, this ceremonial gown, the Karaginu. . . . Look—

PRIEST. How strange. In that tumble-down cottage, in the bower, a lady clad in bright robes! In the pierced hat of Sukihitai's time! She seems to speak, saying, "Behold me"! What can all of this mean?

SPIRIT.

This is the very dress brought from China,
Whereof they sing in the ballad,
'Tis the gown of the Empress Takamo Kisi,
Who reigned of old in Leiwa Muno;
She is Narihira's beloved,
Who danced the Gosetsu music;
At eighteen she won him,
She was his light in her youth.

This hat is for Gosetsu dancing,
For the Dance of Toyo no Akari;
Narihira went covered in like.
A hat and a robe of remembrance!
I am come clad in a memory.

PRIEST. You had better put them aside. But who are you?

SPIRIT. I am indeed the spirit, Kakitsuhata, the colors of remembrance. And Narihira was the incarnation of the Bosatsu of Gobusaki's music. Holy magic is run through his words and through the notes of his singing, till even the grass and the flowers pray to him for the blessings of dew.

PRIEST. A fine thing in a world run waste,
I preach the law of Bosatsu
To the plants that are without mind.

SPIRIT. This was our service to Buddha,
This dance, in the old days.

PRIEST. [*Hearing the music.*] This is indeed
spirit music.

SPIRIT. [*Beginning the words of the dance
ritual.*] He took the form of a man

PRIEST. Journeying out afar
From his bright city.

SPIRIT. Saving all . . .

PRIEST. . . . by his favor.

CHORUS. Going out afar and afar
I put on robes for the dance.

SPIRIT. A robe for the sorrow of parting.

CHORUS. I send the sleeves back to the city.

SPIRIT. This story has no beginning and no end;
No man has known the doer and no man
has seen the deed.

In the old days a man,
Wearing his first hat-of-manhood,
Went out a-hunting
Toward the town of Kasaga in Nara.

CHORUS. We think it was in the time
Of the reign of Nimmio Tenno.
He was granted by Imperial Decree:
"About the beginning of March,
When the mists are still-banked upon
Oyuchiyama the mountain,"
He was granted the hat-insignia, suki-
hitai,

As chief messenger to the festival of

SPIRIT. An unusual favor.
Kasuga.

CHORUS. It was a rare thing to hold the plays
and Genbuki ceremony in the palace itself. This
was the first time it happened.

But the world's glory is only for once,
 Comes once, blows once, and soon fades,
 So also to him, he went out
 To seek his luck in Adzuma.
 Wandering like a piece of cloud, at last
 After years he came
 And looking upon the waves at Ise no Owai,
 He longed for his brief year of glory:

“The waves, the breakers return,

But my glory comes not again,

Narihira, Narihira,

My glory comes not again.”

He stood at the foot of Amasa of Shimano, and saw
 the smoke curling upwards.

SPIRIT. The smoke is now curling up
 From the peak of Amasa.

“Narihira, Narihira,

My glory comes not again.”

CHORUS. Strangers from afar and afar,
 Will they not wonder at this?
 He went on afar and afar
 And came to Mikawa, the province,
 To the flowers Kakitsuhata
 That flare and flaunt in their marsh
 By the many-bridged cob-web of waters.
 “*She whom I left in the city?*” thought
 Narihira.

But at the place of eight bridges the
 stream-bed is never dry.

He was pledged with many a lady;

And from the jeweled blind

The fire-flies drift away

Scattering their little lights

And then flying and flying:

Souls of fair ladies

Going up into heaven

And here in the under-world
 The autumn winds come blowing and
 blowing
 And the wild ducks cry: "Kari . . .
 Kari."

I who speak, an unsteady wraith,
 A form impermanent, drifting after this
 fashion,

Am come to enlighten these people,
 Whether they know me I know not.

SPIRIT. A light that does not lead on to darkness.

CHORUS. [*Singing the poem of Narihira's.*]

No moon!

The spring

Is not the spring of the old days,

My body

Is not my body

But only a body grown old.

"Narihira, Narihira,

My glory comes not again."

CHORUS. Know then that Narihira of old made
 these verses for the Queen Leiwa Tenno. The body
 unravels its shread, the true image divides into
 shade and light. Narihira knew me in the old days.
 Doubt it not, stranger. And now I begin my dance,
 wearing the ancient bright mantle.

The Dance and Its Descriptions.

SPIRIT. The flitting snow before the flowers:
 The butterfly flying.

CHORUS. The nightingales fly in the willow tree:
 The pieces of gold flying.

SPIRIT. The Iris Kakitsuhata of the old days
 Is planted anew.

CHORUS. With the old bright color renewed.

SPIRIT. Thus runs each tale from its beginning,
 We wear the bright iris crest of Azame.

CHORUS. What are the colors of the iris?
 Are they like one another, the Hana, the
 Kakitsu-hata, the Azame?
*[The grey and olive robed chorus obscure
 the bright dancer.]*

What is that that cries from the tree?
*[The SPIRIT is going away, leaving its
 apparition, which fades as it returns
 to the ether.]*

SPIRIT. It is only the cracked husk of the locust,
 The withering husk of the iris.

CHORUS. *[Closing the play.]*
 The sleeves are white like the snow of
 Unohana
 Dropping their petals in April.
 Day comes, the purple flower
 Opens its heart of wisdom,
 It fades out of sight by its thought,
 The flower soul melts into Buddha.

[I have purposely left one or two points of this play unexplained in the opening notice. I do not think anyone will understand the complete beauty of it unless he reads it often, but I wish to prevent anyone's thinking he understands it until he has read it twice at the least. The emotional tone is perhaps apparent. The spirit manifests itself in that particular iris marsh, because Narihira in passing that place centuries before had thought of her. I have underlined the words which mark this, but I think few will have noticed them, for we are little accustomed to Japanese thought and its manners. Our own art is so much an art of emphasis, and even of over-emphasis, that I would gladly persuade the reader to consider the possibilities of an absolutely *unemphasised* art, an art where the author trusts implicitly to his auditor's knowing what things are profound and important.

The Muses were "the Daughters of Memory." It is by memory that this spirit appears, she is able or "bound" to appear because of Narihira's passing thought of the iris. That is to say, the flowers as well as the first shadowy and then bright apparition are the outer veils of her soul. Beauty is the road to salvation, and her apparition "to win people to the lord" or "to enlighten these people," is part of the ritual, that is to say, she demonstrates the "immortality of the soul or the permanence" or endurance of the individual personality by her apparition, first as a simple girl of the locality, secondly in the ancient splendours.—E. P.]

THE CHORIC SCHOOL



CERTAIN amount of interest was evoked by the appearance of the Choric number of *Others* in October last, which was the first publication to present the work of the Choric School *enbloc*. Various articles and cuttings have since appeared in American and English papers, but all are more or less sketchy and incomplete.

The Choric School originated actually from the work of Miss Hester Sainsbury. For many years she had been writing plays, poems and marionette-pieces, but the chances of production were infrequent owing to lack of money; what performances were given were not adequately noticed. This went on until a short while ago—when a discerning and public-minded patron assured Miss Sainsbury the means of carrying out her ideas for a period of three years. From that time the Clarissa Club—as it was then called—took on a new lease of life. Projects were entered on with a delirious abandon, many performances were given and recognition was won; since then Miss Sainsbury has not looked back. A house was taken with a room large enough to hold a stage—small but adequate—and capable of seating some sixty people. Now a piece of land adjoining the house has been acquired and a small theatre is in process of building sufficient when finished to hold up to a hundred people in an intimate and sympathetic environment.

I quote here an interesting cutting from a London

paper by Mark Perugini, author of *The Art of Ballet*, which will give the reader a clear idea of what Miss Sainsbury was after when she began. Since then, however, her ideas have changed somewhat—but this will be dealt with later.

“Of quite remarkable beauty and originality, *A Phantasy in Black and White* by Miss Hester Sainsbury was received with most cordial appreciation by ‘full houses’ when it was produced on two evenings of last week at Queen’s College, Harley Street. Even great poets have made the mistake of thinking that because they could write good poetry they could necessarily write a good play, ignoring the fact that the technique of the poet is not necessarily the training for the totally different technique of the dramatist. It was therefore a more than usually ambitious effort for a young author to essay not only a play but a play in verse; and one can hardly give higher praise than to say the effort justified itself; for this very graceful ‘phantasy’—as poetical in treatment as an Elizabethan masque, as original and daring in execution as some of Aubrey Beardsley’s finest and more spirituelle work—held the audience throughout, not only by the richness of its poetic fancy and the musical beauty of the lines, but by the innate sense of drama displayed. There were always the two elements which are so often lacking in dramatic work of a poet, and must inevitably be present if a work, even in prose, is to achieve its effect as drama: the elements of action and of surprise. It began with a quaint little prologue, taking the form of a discussion among Lady Caroline, a representative of 1830; Lady Clare, an advanced young lady of today; and an Attendant, as to the possibilities of the play. Lady Caroline, with the primness becoming to her period, hoped devoutly

there would be nothing to shock her superfine moral sense; Lady Clare, between the puffs of a cigarette, hoped only she should not be bored to death; while the Attendant quietly raised their and the audience's curiosity as to what should come. The people of the prologue, like those of the play, were dressed wholly in black and white.

"The drama itself dealt with the struggle between 'Good' and 'Evil' for a 'Woman's Soul'; the various steps of her spiritual growth under the warring influence being marked by the entry from time to time of dancing 'Years'. The *motif* of the play was that eternal question as to the existence and the purport of 'Evil' in the Divine plan. Temporary triumph of 'Evil' by permission of 'Good' changed the garment of the woman's soul from mingled black and white to pure black; the passing of the Years, bringing lessons of Experience, changed it yet again to grey; until upon her asking of 'Good' that 'Evil', previously slain at her request, should be again brought back to life, without which 'Good' itself were hardly manifest, her garment changed once again, this time to purest white; as 'Evil' asked of 'Good' how long the war between them should persist, she received from 'Good' a kiss of reconciliation, and the little play closed with the entry of the dancing 'Years.' As interesting in many ways in its moral aim as *Everyman*, the play gained in artistic impressiveness from the very fact that it was in black and white. It was admirably staged. There was something suggestive of Durer, of Holbein's 'Dance of Death', of Maeterlinckian simplicity and atmosphere, something cumulatively fantastic and unearthly, while always beautiful; and the play was finely acted.

This, quoted from the same periodical at a some-

what later date, when *The Idol*, *Coquette*, *Mammon* and *Venus and Adonis* were produced, this time at the Rehearsal Theatre, contains the following apposite passage: "The plays were all by Hester Sainsbury, who has also designed scenery and properties which have been executed by the company. This shows the proper spirit—the spirit of the true 'amateur' or lover of the arts. If a few more 'amateurs' would write their own plays, design and make their own costumes, scenery and properties, there would be a new source of inspiration for the professional stage."

This last remark is particularly interesting, for the *Encore*, the organ of the professionals employed in the music halls here, remarks about Miss Sainsbury's Clarissa Club "that something for the music hall of the future looks like coming out of Chelsea." The writer goes on to say: "A party of young women in an old house in Chelsea are striving hard to take the art of dancing a step farther ahead—every spoken phrase was accompanied by dancing movement—yet though they at first struck the observer as jerky and odd—after the first minute or two one lost sight of this and the novelty became quite enjoyable. One might express the action as marionette-like but with the dolls speaking and behind all a strong artistic reason." He then goes on to quote a communication made to him by Hester Sainsbury which explains very well what she is after: "I am aiming at a purely conventional method of representation both in acting and dancing, because I think it is the only way of getting the basic emotion or idea expressed without the impure interruption of realism or the equally destructive element of the personality of the performer herself. I also consider it a wrong idea that the dance must

be assisted by music. A dance can be equally successful with metre used as time and words as melody. Again a dance can be complete without poetry or music, simply as movements expressing an idea—emotional or otherwise.” The manifesto is not remarkable for novelty and no one will quarrel with its definitions, but to the readers of the *Encore* it must indeed have seemed—as the Critic remarks—“very high-brow stuff.”

It will be noticed again and again in these quotations that invariably the insistence is on rhythm—and the capacities for rhythm which are educed from these performances. This I think is not so much due to the quality of the verse—but rather to the conception of movement which Miss Sainsbury and her sister-in-law carry into effect. Its charm is that it is pure rhythm—natural and instinctive rhythm, and not a calculated and, one might almost say, geometrical rhythm such as is produced by the Reinhardt and Craig Schools.

As Ezra Pound very truly says in his introduction to the Choric number of *Others*, it seemed certain they had come on their form in no spirit of research but simply because they wanted to dance.

Huntly Carter in *Colour* recently delivered himself thus: “In the course of the performance the players contrived to throw a flood of decorative light on their movements. Each movement was a design as precise as Imagist verse. The plays . . . were given in simple backgrounds of white and of coloured chintz, which the players festoon with their decorative movements as with votive offerings.”

All this time I have been talking of Miss Sainsbury and the assistance given to her by her sister-in-law, and various others—what is in fact the Clarissa Club. I cannot explain Miss Sainsbury’s choice of

this name. It is a name to conjure up an atmosphere and as such is indeed perfectly fitted to its end.

But then Kathleen Dillon joined the Clarissa Club and began to do things of her own. She introduced into the performances a modernity and in a sense a strenuousness that till then they had not possessed.

By a modernity I mean particularly a spontaneity and an *élan* which only one who was as young as Miss Dillon could hope to attain. There is a perfection and simplicity and compactness—by no means synonymous terms—which, compared with Miss Sainsbury's work, is like the real faun looking at the faun of Praxiteles. One is, in a sense, consciously artistic, the other—an *élan vital*.

It is an unhappy sign that with years Miss Dillon is appearing to lose this spontaneity—but the poems will explain best what is this magic leaven, about which I am enthusiastic:

It is a cold, grey morning
and the wind scarcely moves
and the sun cannot pierce through its
covering of grey.

The wind wakes up,
the trees begin to sway
and the paper in the street below
is blown in a circle . . .
then . . . right away.

This poem danced out is one of the most charming I know. Miss Dillon appears in a short white frock and a green peplum. She recites the poem, at the same time making conventional gestures which at once evoke images of the morning, the wind, the sun, the trees. Then with the lines

and the paper in the street below
is blown in a circle . . .
then . . . right away.

she pirouettes two or three times and blows off the stage. It is hard to explain the charm of this dance. It is enchanting—perhaps because it is a child dancing—a child rather like one of the women out of Botticelli's *Primavera*—or maybe the purity and clarity of the poem itself.

Then, too, Miss Dillon produced a cubist dance. First of all she painted a cubist back-cloth. Then she made a cubist dress. Then she tried to transfer the two-dimensioned back-cloth into the three dimensions of solid things by dancing out the design.

Obviously the name Clarissa would no longer do. It was beginning to be something more considerable than the name Clarissa would wholly cover, and so the name Choric School was adopted.

This is indeed adequate, for under the aegis of Choric School we could all shelter; though my own work within certain limits is as disparate from the work of Miss Sainsbury and Miss Dillon as could well be imagined. Those who are familiar with my manifesto on the theatre, which appeared in the November, 1914, number of the *Egoist*, will at once see this. There I pleaded for a theatre from which all complexities should be abolished. If the theatre is the place for action—and who will deny it—words, staging, scenery, all are unnecessary. Even a *mise-en-scène* that involved other than strict abstractions of human figures must be excluded.

There is another form of Miss Sainsbury's art which is the purest I think I have ever seen; I refer to the pure action or marionette plays. The first play of the kind I saw was *Daphne and Apollo*—and the simplicity of the *mise-en-scène* won my admiration immediately. Had it been put on as adumbrated by Remy de Gourmont in his rubric to the *Chevaux*

de Diomedes, it might certainly have been wittier, but whether more effective can hardly be said.

Si j'avais rencontre Apollon je ne me
serais changée en figuier
En laurier?
Cela ne fait rien.

The Clarissa Club worked it out in this way: At each end of the stage is a screen. The actors pass behind this and the suggestion is of so many definite stages in a journey. Daphne enters running easily, Apollo leaping after. She disappears behind a screen. She appears again, tired now and afraid. Apollo still leaps after her. This is repeated. At each stage Daphne becomes more and more exhausted—and the stages of exhaustion are simulated and varied in the most beautiful and savant of manners. Finally she can struggle on no further. With a despairing effort she raises her hands to the heavens calling down protection. A curtain with a laurel worked on it descends covering her—and hiding her from the baffled God. All this is done against a background of huge trees worked in blue and black worsted on a white cloth, so that one is on a level with their tops and outside mundane things. This dance, which is over in five minutes, is, I think, the best piece of work the school has done.

Adam and Eve, and *Cain and Abel* are the same sort of play and are equally effective, though perhaps not so compact. However, I think it is by these dumb action plays in which the utmost refinements of interpretation are utilized that the indebtedness of the theatre of the future will be measured.

I think this is where Miss Sainsbury and myself

approach closest. It has long been one of my dreams to produce plays as compact and economical as her own—less colour, perhaps, and not so strong a personal rhythm—thus, I think, minimizing what might well be a Kosmic Rhythm—but it may be that what the Clarissa Club was unable to achieve may be accomplished by the Choric School.

I must refer here again to Ezra Pound's admirable preface. He says of the Choric School: "Their dancing is touched perhaps with the ubiquitous influence of Pavlowa and the Russians, but the planning is quite their own. Their work has about it an aroma, sensuous and naively sophisticated, fitted to cause *admiratio* to my more scholarly and puritanical mind. Remembering how great an effect *Al entrade del tens clar* and the later dance songs (it was such music that sent folk dancing from Provence to the far north country) have had on our European metre and poesy, I was at once interested and excited by the possibility which their work has, a possibility of reanimating our verse. And this was all the more engaging, as it seemed certain that they had come on their form in no spirit of research, but simply because they wanted to dance and had no orchestra. Many hold that poesy was associated with dancing before men tried to wed words with music.

At any rate the dance basis is fundamental in most early poetry.

To preserve that laudable balance which makes men successful reviewers, the apologist should here begin a sentence—Whether this new mode of dance poem. . . . I shall leave that sentence unwritten. Miss Dillon is very charming when she dances *It is a cold grey morning*. In some dance poems the 'whole art' is the words with the dancing—and in

such poems the isolated words are perforce incomplete.

This is perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the Choric School *née* Clarissa Club. Where will it go—to what heights aspire? It has already been promised a successful *avenir* on the music hall. In an intelligent theatre—there is none in England—work such as theirs could not go for long unrecognized. That it may be like a meteor bringing other air and other fires to this planet is sufficiently obvious, for in its wake it has touched new enthusiasms and dead hearts and emotions to flame. Does one see Europe dancing again—I cannot see it, but if it does not it will not be the fault of the Choric School.

I end by quoting a poem by Alfred Kreymborg to Hester Sainsbury, whom he has never seen, but only as a photograph which he was good enough to print in his article on *Vers libre* and *vers libristes* in the *New York Morning Telegraph* for August 5 of last year:

To H. S.

Those people out there
moving about in mist
dancing mist
dancing blue grey mist,
gravely gay dancing mist—
(or do they do the dancing)
are always coming so close to you,
you're always getting so close to them—
but you never touch.

Don't you love them?
Queer beautiful things.
Mist people
You ought to—
you're one of them

JOHN RODKER.

PAGANISM IN POPULAR PLAYS.



THAT the principles of paganism are still rampant in life, we have only to read the newspapers to prove; but we have not been sufficiently aware how touched with the same taint has been our art. A certain anti-Christian morality has for some time been a marked characteristic of much of our dramatic literature.

While the Oxford dictionary defines a pagan as "an unenlightened person, a heathen"; and heathen as "one who is neither Christian, Jewish, nor Mohammedan," generally speaking, we limit the term to mean that person or point of view which is opposed to the accepted ethics of a Christian civilization. A pagan would not be expected to be altruistic nor unselfish; a professed follower of the Galilean would. A pagan would rarely be tender or constructively sympathetic with misfortune; a Christian is supposed to be so. And a pagan would tend to disregard prevailing moral and social codes.

Of course, in business as in other forms of warfare, even a Christian is allowed certain lapses from accepted religious standards. In fact, for a successful business man during office hours to be anything but pagan must be more difficult than for him to emulate the oft-quoted camel in its efforts to wriggle through the gate called the Needle's Eye. That is, no doubt, the reason why our popular plays dealing with business situations have the protagonists frankly employ pagan tactics. The very aggressive nature of competition precludes the possibility of

any other treatment, though presumably the time is now ripe for a peace-propaganda play preaching profit-sharing as a panacea, and affording ample opportunities for burlesque.

But when selfish conflict ceases in life, we may expect the objective drama to cease also. The ego-ful struggle of man as a sexually and economically driven animal has so far been the basis of all our histrionic activity. When, as Anatole France has pointed out, an exact knowledge of reality comes to bless humanity, and a life without violence ensues, making the human race indifferent to tragedy in art because no longer familiar with it in life, the catastrophic struggle on the stage will be only a matter of history; and when sex-equality and the unification of classes has been consummated, comedy likewise will be deprived of nearly all its subject matter. The theatre may then become almost exclusively musical, for objective struggle between human antagonists, thus deprived of a motive in art as well as in life, will, by disappearing, give way to a subjective presentation of emotion. By the time that sex has disappeared as a motive, however,—for it is said that mankind is tending to become neuter like the ant and the bee—it is a question whether music would any longer have an appeal.

But until such an extreme socialization of our lives does take place, with its crop of supplanting supermen, the selfish, pagan attitude of our ancestors and ourselves will not become obsolete. It would be quite safe to predict that the conflicts of the individual with social or eternal laws will not cease for several generations to come. So far, at any rate, the pagan is certainly not considered abnormal, nor the selfish person regarded as a social pervert. But in a civilization which has been taught to regard itself as

Christian, it is strange to find even its art so often fundamentally pagan.

Perhaps a certain heathen delight in suffering has always been an inherent quality in tragedy. In the earliest form of the art it manifested itself in the elaborate torture of enemies. To primitive man, the screams and agonized contortions of the afflicted were very pleasing indeed, and they doubtless enjoyed the spectacle prodigiously; but from our point of view, only slightly modified though it may be, however, in these days of incorporated irresponsibility and long-distance sinning, of hymns of hate and invocations to the God of Battles for success in wholesale mutilation and slaughter, such festivities in public would properly be regarded as inartistic, and, certainly, as tragic rather than comic. Primitive man also found artistic delight in the making of battle songs which reflected his ferocity, his pre-occupation with physical suffering. He maintained an exaggerated interest in death, just as for many centuries the attention of Christians has been focused upon the gloomy and repellant spectacle of a Man's terrible crucifixion and death, rather than upon His much more illuminating life and resurrection. Though our progenitors had a terror of the unknown and the unseen, their sense of pity seems to have been hardly developed. Their unholy glee in gouging out eyes, flaying bodies, searing with hot metal, tearing with pincers, twisting with rack and screw, and crucifying is sufficient proof of this callousness; and while it all may have been done to make the ultimate escape into the dark and dreaded future more welcome, it is more likely that this was an indulgence of early æsthetic proclivities.

We attribute to Aristotle the invention of our most delightful apology for tragedy as an intellec-

tual and moral cathartic, emptying the beholder of self-pity and scaring him with its spectacle of the suffering that is destined to follow sin; but Rousseau showed that people really liked tragedy because, true pagans to the last, they could thus see others suffer without suffering themselves.

Frequently pagan also was the comedy of the past, though the widening scope of our pity is tending to make it seem less comic than formerly. In the revival of Bronson Howard's *Henrietta*, now only thirty years old, the villain is not finally killed, but only banished, and the semi-pagan audience, which has never fully accepted the divine doctrine of forgiveness, is content. A generation ago, though apparently then more religious, it insisted on his death.

Blindness was often made ridiculous, the blind man being regarded as half butt and half buffoon. In *Ædipus*, to be sure, blindness is tragically treated, but its violent self-infliction arouses chiefly horror; Stevenson used it more characteristically in *Treasure Island* as a quotesque and fearful attribute of old Pew. Shakespeare, however, made us pity the blindness of Gloster in *King Lear*, horrible though its infliction is there; Scribe made it sentimental in *Valerie*; while Maeterlinck gave it universal tragic significance in *The Blind*, where it stands as a permanent symbol of mankind's ignorance of the purpose of life.

Even insanity was cheaply comic in the thirteenth century. The fool at court was often not a professional in motley, but an actual idiot or a mild maniac whose absurd maunderings and abnormal antics were thought "funny." Compare the advance in sympathy in *Lear*, where we have not only the pitiful madness of the King, but the feigned madness

of Edgar, the professional madness of the wise and faithful fool, the dawning madness of Gloster, and the madness of the elements; or witness the pathetic picture of poor, mad Ophelia; and then note our present refusal to handle on the stage, even gently, such painful facts, unless they serve to press home the evil of a general social condition. Thus one infirmity after another has been abandoned, regarded no longer as fair game. Such subjects, from the Christian point of view, are as unfit for jocular treatment in art as beggars or cripples in life.

Deafness, to be sure, is still thought humorous; wooden legs, even; corpulence more frequently. In *The Round-Up*, however, the true and tried fat man, whom no one will take seriously, though he himself is tremendously serious about his love-throes, does arouse real sympathy as well as amusement; he is so likable and faithful that we cannot laugh at him without at the same time feeling sorry for him. Rachel Crothers in her *Young Wisdom* makes us sympathetic even with masculine stupidity, and we really regret the failure of the good but thick-headed half-hero, Peter, to obtain the girl whom he thought he loved.

Deafness in *The Silent Voice* is so necessary to the motivation of the play that, contrary to custom, we are not diverted by it; but in *The Servant in the House* the Bishop of Lancashire's deafness, aside from its spiritual significance, is used to impart some crude humor to the scene when the Drain-Man curses the bishop to his face, the latter mistaking his remarks for an invitation to sit down to breakfast. Incidentally, this device of deafness cleverly isolates the conversation between the Drain-Man and Manson, which would otherwise have been overheard by the bishop, preoccupied though he is with his

heartly breakfast. Our enjoyment of this scene is, after all, dependent largely upon the old pagan attitude which, whether manifested in the youth of the race or the youth of the individual, has found weakness and deformity funny. In cases of this sort, however, the humor arises perhaps as much from a contemplation of the mental and spiritual abnormality as from any physical defect, so that one could argue that a similar shift had begun to take place in the conception of comedy in general.

In the last analysis, of course, all humor, being based upon a sense of incongruity, on the perception of a falling short of an ideal, or the failure to reach an expected normal, is instinctively pagan. With widened sympathy comes an inability to view these lapses from standard concepts as causes for laughter. That Shakespeare is more highly regarded now for his tragedies than for his comedies may be due in part to the fact that we are more in accord still with the sympathy he displays for suffering in his tragedies, while in the comedies we cannot forget a certain callousness in the humor. His Sir Andrew Aguecheek has already become somewhat tragic and pathetic; Sir Toby will become so; it may be that even with Sir John Falstaff the hearty laughter of the beholder will die down under the steady gaze of the discerning psychologist. Humor in its most objective form, the practical joke, is only a mild form of cruelty. The person who pulls away a chair from another person about to sit down in it, or the boy who plants a bent pin in the teacher's seat, is indulging a common but pagan proclivity to torture. The victim really suffers, if only for a moment, and it is assuredly a pagan impulse to express delight in such discomfiture by laughter. A man who slips on the ice is funny only while we are intellectually con-

scious of his fall from the expected perpendicular, and becomes tragic as soon as we see that he has broken a leg or fractured his skull or smashed to pieces the watch he was on his way to pawn to buy bread for his starving children. The skull-boring scene in *The Wizard of Oz* aroused shudders of horror as well as laughter, and burlesque operations on legs and bodies, formerly frequent in farce, are now more and more relegated to circus clowning or the "movies," or banished altogether.

An old maid we still regard as a fit subject for mirth, especially if the spinster be plain-featured and show an earnest desire to be loved, forgetting usually the tragic undevelopment of a nature which has had to deny itself the natural satisfaction of life's greatest need and most profound emotional experience. Unhandsome but passionate bachelorhood is likewise made more humorous than pitiful, though *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *Gringoire* were not so funny as pathetic in the rôle. When our professed Christianity becomes inherent, farce-comedy and farce, perceived emotionally instead of, as now, intellectually, will be deprived of the unsympathetic, pagan attitude on the part of the beholder, which is its basis now, and will disappear.

Wholesale respect, born of understanding, exists today between even the most bitter belligerents; racial ridicule long since began to die out. For us *Shylock the Jew* has lost his black ferocity; so much has our point of view changed that today we feel "the poor old man was wronged" by the aristocrats, who first spit upon him, called him dog, went to him when they were in trouble, and received aid, and then preached to him of mercy just before taking from him the last things he had in life to make it worth while. Certainly the school board that desired

to remove *The Merchant of Venice* from the required reading list because it insulted the Jewish race could have made a much better argument by showing how derogatory it was to the Christians. Here we have a pitiful figure of the social outcast—the only real gentleman of the play, says Otis Skinner—ruined by his more influential fellow-speculators, stumbling from the court-room, broken in body and killed in soul, the faith of his fathers scorned, his home desecrated, his daughter and his keepsakes stolen, his property confiscated, and the only possible profession the law allowed him hopelessly wrecked by the carping Christian competitors. The chatter of these in the last act only intensifies the bitter gloom which remains as we ask in vain, “But what of Shylock?” Yet this play less than three hundred years ago was thought uproariously ludicrous!

So, too, the bodily deformity of Richard III once raised many a laugh from the thoughtless spectators. Today we regard it with loathing when not with pity, and our interest is largely psychological in watching the effect that twisted physique exerts on mentality and character. In fact, a kindly Christian tolerance may be expected eventually to rule out all but a sympathetic attitude towards those who are physically, mentally, or spiritually unfortunate.

In the same way, we are tending to regard the common toiler and the illiterate peasant, not as did Shakespeare his grave-diggers, constables, mechanics, servants, and rustics, as the clowns of the play, the “comic relief,” at whom the rich courtiers and the kings may jest and sneer, but as the leading figures, the typical, representative, heroic personages of the modern serious drama; for perhaps the environmentally unfortunate are just as much to be pitied as those who are physically and mentally ill-

starred. Environment may be held to be the determining factor in all world-trouble or personal "sin" of the future. The old condescending attitude towards the proletariat class, supplying buffoonery at the expense of honest workers, as in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, gives way with the widening scope of pity, while a physiological or economic cause is found to explain even the crimes of our tragic heroes and heroines today, from the time of Jean Valjean to that of *The Case of Becky*.

But there is one theme towards which our pagan attitude still persists with little, if any change. We still regard sexual vice with humorous complacency. Our most popular musical comedies portray the social evil in all its enticing forms, leaving the serious drama to attack it with only partial effectiveness from the economic side. *The Merry Widow* and its successors present us with the melodious gyrations of a drunken profligate and a high-priced courtesan. In many such "comedies" vice is put alluringly and beautifully before us, with a wealth of rhythm, color, and graceful movement calculated to deflect the youthful or even bald-headed observer far from the straight and narrow way of self-restraint and kindness to one's fellow creatures.

It is not a sign of sudden decadence thus to present vice. Representatives of this oldest profession of the world have been exhibited pleasingly on the stage from the very beginnings of the drama. The marvel is that an avowedly Christian art should tolerate and even encourage such displays now. But a greater marvel than this is the fact that whenever the woman of the streets is introduced in all her ugly wretchedness, as she has been in a number of recent plays, there is immediately a protest from pulpit and

press. When "Mrs. Warren" appears, vulgar and miserable, the police are told to forbid the public admission, as she is contaminating to thought and morals. If she were to do a staircase waltz there would be no exercise of the censorship. When *Damaged Goods* is presented there has to be practised a subterfuge of membership in a medical society before tickets can be procured; and when the technique of the fall of woman is shown on the films and labeled *An Exposure of the White Slave Traffic*, litigation is immediately incurred. Such "Traffic-in-Souls" pictures or plays, with their flaming warnings, do not, presumably, make sufficiently fashionable and fascinating the life of the demimonde to the yearning and unsuspecting department-store employee, whose immorally low wages are not subjected to the same scrutiny. It may take another era of sex plays to educate us up to the level of pagan decency; thus far an essentially immoral reticence has for the most part shut from the public the facts, while permitting the blatant enticements of such a life to be presented on the stage and to pass almost unchallenged.

While it is true that art that depresses is not good art, playwrights have recently succeeded in providing us with examples calculated to teach to the unawakened the expediency, if not the blessedness, of virtue. Though the curtain in *Maternity* comes down on a scene of ignominy and confusion, there is earnest purpose in the picture, and M. Brioux holds out a promise of hope in the fact that such conditions are not unchangeable. The remedy, as always, is an enlightened public opinion. While the charge has been brought that the material treated in his *Damaged Goods* is more suitable for the physician, the pathologist, the criminologist, and the legis-

lator than for the playwright, yet it can be shown that these other channels lack the personal emotionalization of presentation to the public that is necessary before a social shame can be thoroughly exterminated. M. Brioux does not simply "shock our feelings without contributing any solution of the difficulties attending the question at issue"; he stirs us up to make a campaign of public education; and it is not likely that such education can be accomplished with a purely intellectual appeal. Sex plays are not now a species of drains that prevent moral diphtheria and spiritual typhoid; but even if they were they would be tremendously worth while. A playwright is not merely a sanitary engineer in ethics; but if he were, all praise to him. Nor is play-going reduced to a branch of intellectual hygiene, important though that would be.

Cosmo Hamilton's *Blindness of Virtue* proved to be not only a sane and sweet corrective to the idea of foolish feminine ignorance of the facts of life, but an admirably dramatic performance as well. Edward Knoblauch's *Marie Odile* is a masterpiece of delicacy dealing in a more beautiful way with virginal simplicity. Charles Rann Kennedy's *The Necessary Evil* puts the problem of prostitution before us with unflinching earnestness and personal appeal. Galsworthy's *The Eldest Son* and Stanley Houghton's *Hindle Wakes* give us most simply and effectively the counter-challenge of freed womankind to the eon-old wild-oats philosophy of ex-masterful man. Rachel Crothers' *Ourselves* and *A Man's World* argue most emotionally for a single and feminine standard of morality. Eugene Walters' *Easiest Way* conveys powerfully the economic significance of sex-slavery and sex-salability; and Galsworthy's *The Fugitive* does so more indirectly, while at the same time giving

us a searching analysis of a case of incompatibility. Percy Mackaye's *Tomorrow*, Lydston's *The Blood of the Fathers*, Brown's *Mrs. Raford*, *Humanist*, all show, like Ibsen's *Ghosts*, the necessity for checking the propagation of the unfit and the infected, and do so with much poignancy of appeal. Though the sins of dissipation are not always visited upon the spinal columns of the sons, and though Ibsen's purpose was not primarily to show this, yet it is well to call attention to the probability. *The Family Cupboard*, Ellis' *Any Night*, Morton's *Yellow Ticket*, Scarborough's *The Lure*, Villier's *The Fight*—the last two in spite of police emasculation—register emphatic protests against capitalized vice. Somerset Maugham in *A Man of Honor* shows the tragedy of seduction reacting upon the man as well as upon the woman. Robert McLaughlin's *The Eternal Magdalene* challenges the ineffective piety of commercialized evangelism in fighting the social evil, and exposes the unscientific methods of bigoted reformers. Granville Barker's *Waste*, though banned by the censor, has reached a wide play-reading public with its clean handling of the evil of abortion, placing much of the blame upon an exaggerated social ostracism for illegitimacy. So does the strikingly powerful play of Lovett, called *Cowards*.

All these plays, somewhat in the nature of exceptions to the traditional Anglo-Saxon policy of reticence in such matters, though the same literary prudery has never been exercised against the more musical and glamorous forms of presentation, show a praiseworthy desire to face facts and to build art upon reality, though we have some distance yet to traverse before we shall reach full emancipation. The illogical happy ending is, however, still our besetting sin. When there is widespread and whole-

some knowledge of the patient toil necessary to rebuild spiritual as well as bodily cell tissue, instead of a blind faith that the stained pages of life may be made white by merely taking thought, or that the thistles that have been sown will spring up as luscious figs, we shall have fewer slurs cast upon the American drama.

For it is pagan to believe in magic, white or black; it is ignoble and un-Christian to shirk logical results. While it may not have been inevitable for Paula Tanqueray to commit suicide, or for her successor, Zoe Blundel, in *Mid-Channel*, to follow her example, yet that solution, inadequate though it must always seem, is more morally stimulating even if pagan than the "whitewashing" of *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith* with the aid of the Anglican Church, true to our religious traditions though that may be. It was a similarly mistaken demand on the part of the public that forced Sir Arthur Wing Pinero not to represent *Sweet Lavender* as an illegitimate child.

A somewhat less insidious paganism than these evasions of the logic of events is to be observed in the widespread justification of certain types of theft and lawlessness in our present plays. This may be an economic reaction on the part of the public, who have so long been edified in the newspapers by the spectacle of pardoned rich men, untried stock gamblers, acquitted millionaire corner-manipulators, escaped bank looters, and the like. If these men may buy their freedom, what more natural than that we should pity the poorer devils who are caught and who have to suffer? It is not altogether a sentimental sympathy that we feel for Raffles and Jimmy Valentine, gallant and gentlemanly thieves though they are. Why not glorify burglary on these lower

and more dangerous levels, says the public, if we are to do so in the more indirect forms it assumes in high places, as stock-watering or cornering the market, where the fine, if caught, is apparently less than one per cent of the profits? These stage thieves are much more inspiring, daring, and adventurous chevaliers.

And so, because a laxness in the economic morality of "those higher up" reacts to justify it on a small scale as well, we have *Ready Money* glorifying counterfeiting; and *Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford*, in spite of its clever final conversion of the now successful promoters,—prosperity has made them conservative—tacitly filing a brief for knavery and swindling. Judicial duplicity is almost countenanced in *The Lion and the Mouse*. The big film play, *The Birth of a Nation*, justifies violence and lynch-law; *The Argyle Case* exploits crime; *It Pays to Advertise* arouses sympathy for industrial chicanery, graft, and dishonesty; in *A Full House* a thief escapes as a detective, gaining applause by his generosity and wit; *Life* melodramatically allows to go unpunished the forgery of a governor's order and the connivance of a police detective in aiding an innocent convict to escape; while *Within the Law* upholds the outwitting of enemies by a system of blackmail which remains technically legal, and its whole tone and trend is the pagan philosophy of revenge: an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, which Christianity aims to controvert.

Such paganism, we are told, we may expect in art so long as we fail to interpret economically a religion which was vitally economic in its application. It is pointed out that we may continue to expect a general toleration of villainy when the villains are not only appealingly human, but represented as the unjust

sufferers of a pagan economic standard which at the same time professes by its sporadic and institutionalized charity to be Christian. This retaliatory justification of petty thievery and working-class lawlessness, this fighting fire with fire, is a reflex of the general demand for justice to be meted out to the men who control the social and business machinery, before taking it out on the obstinate but minute cogs of its wheels. Justice is felt to be still too rare in industrial life to warrant any immediate abandonment of this pagan delight in witnessing villainy towards the well-to-do. Picaresque fiction, indeed, may well be explained as an artistic challenge to those who impose an unjust "law and order"; and such badness is likely to be tolerated on the stage and elsewhere more and more in proportion as it is seen to be the result of a pagan competitive system.

But of late there has been an increasing number of un-pagan plays. *The Servant in the House* gave us vividly the gospel of service, however disappointing from an idealistic standpoint its pious incarnation of the Galilean may have seemed to some. Mr. Kennedy's plea for universal peace followed soon after this earlier play, in *The Terrible Meek*. There was Jerome's *Passing of the Third Floor Back*, which, in spite of its sudden and successive transformations of personalities from their worse to their better selves by a moralistic objectification of that Better Self in each case, proved extraordinarily appealing as presented by the inimitable Forbes-Robertson. Even Ibsen's *Pillars of Society*, with its somewhat rapidly motivated conversion of Consul Bernick, whose progressive spiritual rehabilitation, however, is subtly indicated in several preceding stages, is full of the applied spirit of Christian forgiveness that is able to controvert even the death-

wage of sin. Pinero likewise in *His House in Order* has his splendid climax, where the choice of the ill-used Nina is the better way of renunciation, charged with the same rare spirit. Mrs. Burnett in her *Dawn of a To-Morrow* presents picturesquely the regenerative power of real sympathy and understanding. Barrie—the old whimsical Barrie—drew for us in *What Every Woman Knows* a very charming manifestation of the all-forgiving, because supremely-loving, wife of an unfaithful husband. *The Piper* Mrs. Peabody made poignant in his struggle between the pagan satisfaction of a cherished and in this case very noble purpose and a Christianity which suddenly impressed upon him the idea of blessedness by renunciation. Clyde Fitch's *The Truth* was another example of happy reconciliation through humility and self-surrender. Zangwill's *Melting-Pot*, Christian as well as Jewish in its presentation of a love which removes class antagonisms, nation-wide prejudices, race-hatreds, and blood feuds, is another triumph of a Christianly fraternal civilization over a paganly destructive competitive one. Moody's *Great Divide* is still another excellent illustration of the triumph of unselfish love over the pagan principle of personal possession.

Many more plays might be cited, but these are enough to indicate how the leaven of altruism, cooperation, internationalism, Christianity—call it what you will—is valiantly in conflict with the pagan principles of unmodified self-interest, class antagonism, and economic oppression, which, however, still vigorously survive, their ultimate and cumulative expression being war.

Comedy tends to be regarded with more and more seriousness as we cease to view lapses from the normal standards of civilized conduct as amusing;

it approaches steadily towards the tragic concept, though tragedy itself is moving towards a modified form with a possible happier ending. In both types humor will persist, as it does in life, as a means of relief from too prolonged tension, to help us over otherwise unmitigated gloom, and to enable us, whether Christian or pagan, to bear the ultimate pain.

EDGAR WHITE BURRILL.

THE PRINTED PLAY.

Hobson's Choice, by Harold Brighouse. The Drama League Series. Doubleday, Page and Company. New York, 1916.

It is probably safe to conjecture that the dramatists who are endeavoring to sound the persisting currents of habits and ideas of the classes which are the woof of their nations, whether or not the material can be whipped into amusing or tense drama, are doing most for the stage and their country. Such dramatists as these are Mr. Brighouse and Mr. Ervine. The frank, homely genre pictures which *Hobson's Choice* offers can be regarded as that kind of effort, to record and to lay bare the tradesmen of England, the class which makes the nation a nation of shopkeepers. The play is stamped with the courage to write indigenous drama.

As it turns out, a slice of the daily run of existence of the Lancashire middle class makes an excellent and highly amusing play. It remains, however, not a set of extraordinary and abnormal incidents in the life of that English locality, but a haphazard photograph of the usual routine. So many have seen the play by this time in production that an attempt to give a comprehensive idea of it would be superfluous. A quotation, however, which particularly impresses in the printed form, and which was slurred over in the presentation, will be enjoyed by auditors of the play and give the stranger a suggestion of Mr. Brighouse's insight:

"HOBSON. [*Talking to his daughters.*] I'm a

decent-minded man. I'm Hobson. I'm British middle-class and proud of it. I stand for common sense and sincerity. You're affected, which is bad sense and insincerity. You've overstepped nice dressing and you've tried grand dressing, which is the occupation of fools and such as have no brains. You forget the modesty of trade and the unparalleled virtues of the British Constitution, which are all based on the sanity of the middle classes, combined with the diligence of the working classes. You're losing balance, and you're putting the things which don't matter in front of the things which do, and if you mean to be a factor in the world, in Lancashire, or a factor in the house of Hobson, you'll become sane."

For many a chuckle and for swift incisions into human nature, there are few choices in the newer stage literature—*Hobson's* is one of them.

Four Irish Plays, by St. John Ervine. The Macmillan Company. New York, 1916.

John Ferguson, by St. John Ervine. The Macmillan Company. New York.

These first plays, *Mixed Marriage*, *The Magnanimous Lover*, *The Critic*, and *The Orangeman*, are evidently in response to a demand for more examples of a popular author's work. They are chiefly interesting in the light that they represent the more primitive dramatic habits and youthful ideas of Mr. Ervine. They lack the richness and maturity of *John Ferguson* or *Jane Clegg*, but they give a hint, even an intimate view, of his interests and his growth.

He had yet to become universal when he wrote *The Orangeman*, the dramatization of a North Irishman and a North Irish custom. The dates of the

pieces are not given, but they were undoubtedly created when he was on his way to the doing of the keen character analysis that renders his later plays masterworks of their kind. He was far from unskilled, as this bit of description shows:

“He is a man of forceful character, quick in his speech and temper. He is very strong without being very wise, and he is what the Belfast people call “a fine man”—that is to say, he is a sober, industrious, decent bigot, with a mind like concrete; he believes in hell-fire and predestination, and smells the devil in every Catholic who passes the door of his small kitchen house. . . .”

St. John Ervine had by that time a very definite idea of the insidious faults of his countrymen. But the plays are more than index fingers to an envious career. *Mixed Marriage* and *The Magnanimous Lover*, in spite of their provincialism, make their points decisively. *The Critic* is a good-natured satire on the dramatic critics of Dublin, who, to Mr. Ervine's way of thinking, are police reporters off duty. Its subject is the reception in Dublin of *The Magnanimous Lover*, which shouts at the narrow Christianity of the north of Ireland. The critics feel the ancient honor and customs of their country blasphemed, and some of their remarks, according to a prefatory note, are lifted *in toto* from the columns of the newspapers. The Orangeman, who still actively worships William III and the battle of the Boyne, is assailed in the context of the play for his idolatry of ancestry and devitalized tradition. Each of the pieces is vehement in its protest and all of them are worth while.

However, even the most dyspeptic reviewer opens a play by Ervine with the feeling that at last he can write a pleasant word. It is a happy premise

to begin with, for the North Irish people of this young Irishman's dramas are among the most living men and women on the stage of the printed play today.

John Ferguson is up to standard. This time Mr. Ervine is dramatizing the habits, customs and psychology of the Ulster clan, a type of Erin's isle little known here but much queried about since their sensationally defiant stand in July, 1914. The play overflows with the material of character—every person and his motives are revealed relentlessly, and understanding of the moves of complex characters is immediate. There is nothing puzzling about the action of "Clutie" John, the wise half-wit, or of Jimmy Caesar, the coward whose life ambition is to be brave. It is brimful with the sense that the author knows exactly what he is talking about, and the reader is carried away into belief by the sheer authority of the writing.

John Ferguson is an old Ulster farmer, and a peace-at-any-price, turn-the-other-cheek, Bible-reading Christian. He is beset by a militant daughter and son. The farm is doomed to foreclosure on a mortgage, and he gives his daughter, Hannah, to Jimmy Caesar, a wealthy coward who promises to pay off the mortgage for the possession of the girl. Hannah accepts to save the farm, but suddenly revolts and flees to Witherow, the mortgagee, to tell him to foreclose. Witherow, having long looked upon Hannah with covetous eyes, seizes the opportunity and wrongs the girl. This deed is the throwing of a bomb into the Ferguson home, already a house of too many differences of opinion. Wrangling as to what shall be done ends in Jimmy Caesar's summoning up enough courage to go out to kill Witherow. Old John, the pacifist, departs by a short

cut to warn Witherow against Caesar. Mrs. Ferguson, a nonentity of a woman, does as little as can be expected of her by putting Hannah to bed. Andrew, the son and the only one aside from his sister who feels the moral insult, is left alone with "Clutie" John, the village know-nothing, who knows everything about the people of the community. He convinces Andrew that Caesar is too weak-kneed to kill anybody, and Andrew takes the gun off the wall to go over the moor to Witherow's farm.

The next day Witherow is found shot, and Caesar is arrested upon suspicion, whereupon Hannah falls in love with him at this suggestion of bravery—a curious but reasonable action. Her love dies soon, however, when Andrew confesses and leaves to take the coward's place in jail, despite the disgusting appeals of his father and mother to fly to America to his uncle, who has just sent money to pay off the mortgage.

It is correct drama, for the incidents are controlled and grow out of the characters. It is vigorous writing and a searching portrayal of the admirable, the picturesque and the despicable in Ulstermen.

Confessional, and other American Plays, by Percival Wilde.
Henry Holt and Company. New York.

The popularity of the printed one-act play is beginning to rival the vogue of the short story, and Mr. Wilde's little volume is an irrefutable argument to hurl at those who doubt it. The dialogue, which is the natural talk of bright people, the pages afflurry with ideas, and the plots fresh with new angles, make the plays admirable companions on the street car or tucked in bed after a day with cold and old facts.

Mr. Wilde speaks better for himself. A character

sketch will show the turn of his mind and of his pen:

"Aristocrat? Not in the sense in which the word was once used. She is the healthy, high-class American girl, who cares less for her ancestors than she does for her descendants. She will cheer herself hoarse at a football game in the afternoon, and forget the world in the magic of a symphony in the evening—because she thinks she understands both—and understands neither—and enjoys life excellently well anyhow."

His people are just that, lifelike and American. His plots are simple because his plays are little—a combination which writers of playlets either forget or ignore.

The plays:

In *Confessional*, a banker by testifying "I don't know" can save the reputation of his forging employer and profit withal a hundred thousand dollars. Shall he? "No," say the banker and Mr. Wilde. The "punch" of *According to Darwin* is the curse of charity's saving the life of a paralytic cripple to a poverty-stricken family. Schnitzlerian in idea is *A Question of Morality*, in which a virtuous girl marries a man of unconventional morals because she is tired of virtue, but who unwittingly reforms him by her force of character. At this disappointment she hies herself away with a man incurably bad; he, to her crushing defeat, abandons her on finding her good. The reconciliation of the wife and the husband concludes a most whimsical play whose dashes of truth are little short of shocks. *The Beautiful Story* concerns a child who, on being told that there is no Santa Claus, reasons that all he has believed is legend and so repudiates God. Theoretically possible, but does it work out that way?

The Apostle, by Paul Hyacinthe Loyson. Translated by Barrett H. Clark. The Drama League Series. Doubleday, Page and Company. New York.

M. Loyson is an unfamiliar figure in the American drama world. *The Apostle*, according to Mr. Baker, in the Introduction, is only his fourth play, and though his first was written thirteen years ago, we are led by the thoughtfulness of this play to wonder at it. We conclude that he has spent a long while in making sure of himself. The obvious deliberation with which the drama was penned suggests that his has been a life of facts. This is quite true for "he has been busy as a fearless fighter for new ideas and the causes of the downtrodden in the paper of which he has been editor-in-chief, *Le Droit de l'Homme*."

The Apostle is, in a manner of speaking, a safe and sane play. It is a play with ideas rather than of ideas. Atheism is the "subject," but only in so far as it is the causation of the fierce clash of opinion which supplies the drama. There is not a line of thesis argument, nor is there any solution offered. The author's business is with facts and he is content to end his play in facts—not with a remedy. It is seldom that dramatic literature comes out that reveals a writer so dead in earnest, so dead in earnest to be right. We thrill at his sincerity and glean a little of his purposefulness when we read that he dedicated one of his plays "to those who believe passionately, to those who deny with energy, to those who investigate loyally."

A word in description of *The Apostle*: Old Badouin is a French senator in the stormy days following the empire. He is a man of wide political experience, dreadfully consistent, and fearfully antagonistic to Catholics. A change in the government calls

him to the cabinet as Minister of Public Instruction. But Badouin's heart is not in his reading, in his writing, or in public life; it is in the future of his son, Octave, the brilliant and popular deputy. The suicide of Octave's secretary, whose love for Octave's wife finds no answer, lights the fuse of the play as it reveals the deputy as an infamous scoundrel. He has been leading a double life, and the information gathered by Badouin's political opponents shows that Octave has borrowed a huge sum from a Catholic bank to pay the expenses of his two lives. Badouin is confronted with this, and finds that his son has hidden the receipts among his secretary's effects, attempting to conceal his own hypocrisy. The problem is: Shall Badouin resign his office or retain it by ostensibly proving his son innocent, as he can easily do? Standing like an unscalable tower, against the entreaties of his wife, his family and his friends, dictated to by his conscience alone, he resigns.

Plays of the Natural and the Supernatural, by Theodore Dreiser. John Lane and Company. New York, 1916.

In newspaper lingo, the "feature" about Mr. Dreiser's plays is that they are not plays at all. The broadest definition of a play contends that it must be stageable—and this many of the plays of this volume are not. The reason for this "feature" is the total disregard for the unity of place. To illustrate, Mr. Dreiser has attempted to enlarge the field of drama so as to present an extra-mundane force simultaneously with its cosmic operation. The result is excursions into metaphysics, and the inclusion in the *dramatis personae* of such characters as The Rhythm of the Universe, elements of chemistry and powers of physics.

If this experiment is no more than a literary and scientific stunt, it is because Mr. Dreiser is writing not drama but psychology in dramatic form. As reading, however, we doubt if there are any other plays that stamp with more force a single impression on the reader's mind. Obviously, the presentation of an idea is relentlessly thorough when the immutable causal motives to action are revealed side by side with the actions themselves—here is human nature complete to the *n*th power.

A word about one of the plays—*Laughing Gas*. A patient is on the operating table—the anesthetic is administered, and the incisions are made. Consciousness slowly evaporates and the spirit is loosed to sail away through the astral planes. The operation is more serious than anticipated, and as life ebbs, the spirit courses farther and farther off—muttering all the while opinions pro and con about leaving materiality. In the meanwhile the surgeons probe hurriedly and mercilessly. It is a strong bit of psychology, lifting the reader away from the page, out of his chair and whirling him into the vapory realms of the before and the hereafter.

A Life of William Shakespeare, by Sir Sidney Lee. New edition, rewritten and enlarged. Illustrated. The Macmillan Company. New York.

We quote from the animadversions of Samuel A. Tannenbaum on Sir Sidney's new edition of his *Life*, in the *Dial* of June 8th:

"Sir Sidney devotes too much space to the marshalling of hordes of facts, facts, facts, which are not only uninteresting in themselves but which contribute absolutely nothing to our understanding or appreciation of Shakespeare. . . . The author's guiding principle seems to have been to include every

fact that can in any way be brought into association with the poet. The result is a maze of shreds and patches without any sense of unity. It would be much nearer the truth to call this volume a dictionary or manual of Shakespeare rather than *A Life of William Shakespeare*.

* * * * *

“Shakespeare was a great genius, but, judged by our standards, not a great man. He was a man like other men, a tangled skein of good and ill together. We shall never know much about him as he lived in the flesh; but Sir Sidney Lee’s picture of him as a lawless, profligate, snobbish, sycophantic, and mercenary opportunist accords but ill with the gentle, sweet, friendly Shakespeare whom Ben Jonson described as of a free and open nature, and whose honesty, civil demeanor and uprightness of dealing Chettle extolled.”

The Nameless One, by Anne Cleveland Cheney. Frederick A. Stokes and Company. New York, 1916.

Miss Cheney’s play is a feminine piece of writing. Its qualities are womanly and its defects are womanly. She has conceived a character in Snick-up, the parentless hunchback boy of the inn stables, piping melancholy melodies on his flute, which is essentially endearing to motherly hearts. He is a poet boy, beautiful in spirit, a boy of faith despite his loneliness and his physical deformity—a figure of pathos. There is nothing big, broad and coarse-fibered in him, nothing of the embryonic leader of men, for he would then have been written by a man. The play itself is one of feminine feeling, the verse light, the story about fatherhood (a conclusive proof), with the facts woven to bring out shades of pathos and love.

The story is set in old England, in the quaint days of the sixteenth century. Edward, Lord Faulkner, is desirous of a son. His young wife is about to bear him a child, and they journey to her home on the Norfolk coast, that she may profit by the restful invigoration of the seaside. A decade before, a wandering gypsy girl had become a mother by Lord Faulkner and had died at childbirth in the coast village where the lord and his lady stop. The child was a boy and a familiar face about the castle of Lady Faulkner when she was a girl. Though his hunched back made him a marked figure, he was pathetically buoyant as he worked about the inn stables. He finds an aglet belonging to Lady Faulkner, after they have arrived, and in his boyish fashion surprises her with it when she sits alone in the garden-close of the inn. A flash of recognition and she faints; and Snick-up, the boy, runs off with fright. He is stopped and jailed for the theft of the aglet. Lady Faulkner, after bearing a daughter, vindicates the boy; but too late—he, saddened by life-long persecution because of the hunchback superstition, is driven to the utmost by days and nights in prison, and swallows poisonous berries just before Lord Faulkner, by means of a ring on the boy's finger, a ring which he had given the gypsy girl, discovers him to be his coveted son.

The ablest work in the play is the creation of Snick-up, full of fantasy and warmth. The excellence of the verse and other elements of beauty make the volume exceedingly readable. The age and tenuity of the plot elements, however, suggest that as acted drama it would not be an entire success.

ALFRED K. EDDY.

RECENT MAGAZINE ARTICLES ON THE DRAMA

PUBLISHED PLAYS AND SPECIAL ARTICLES:

- The Life of Charles Frohman (serial); by Daniel Frohman and Isaac F. Marcossou. *Cosmopolitan*, April.
- My Remembrances (serial); by Edward H. Sothorn. *Scribners*, April.
- Editorials on "What Would Shakespeare Think?" and "Shakespeare and the Bowery." Ditto.
- Rich Prizes for Playwrights; by Dale Carnegie. *American*, April.
- Shakespeare's Later Workmanship (*Pericles* and *King Henry VIII*); by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. *North American Review*, April.
- The Red Man in the Theatre; by Lawrence Gilman. Ditto.
- My Career; by Julia Arthur. *Hearst's*, April.
- The Reputed Brilliance of Oscar Wilde Tarnished; Current Opinion, April.
- The New Manner; *The Little Review*, April.
- At Shakespeare's Shrine; by William Winter. *Theatre*, April.
- The Theatre in Shakespeare's Day; by Charlton Andrews. Ditto.
- Shakespeare and His Friends; by Otis Skinner. Ditto.
- Shakespeare's Gloves; by H. H. Furness, Jr. Ditto.
- William Shakespeare, Gentleman; by C. S. Mate. Ditto.
- An Appeal for Shakespeare Prompt Books; by Brander Matthews. Ditto.
- Shakespeare—a poem; by Percy MacKaye. Ditto.
- My Hundred *Hamlets*; by George C. Warren. Ditto.
- An Unique Copy of *Macbeth*; by Charles Rann Kennedy. Ditto.
- The Man and the Poet; E. F. Conrad. Ditto.
- Decorating Shakespeare; by Livingston Platt. Ditto.
- Composers Whom Shakespeare Inspired; by Morris J. Paul. Ditto.

- A Preserver of the Shakespeare Tradition; by Clarence Stratton. Ditto.
- The Enemies of Shakespeare; by Lawrence Street. Ditto.
- The Humor of Shakespeare; by Alan Dale. Ditto.
- The Women of Shakespeare; by Ada Patterson. Ditto.
- The First Folio Edition; by M. J. Montaigne.
- The Shakespeare Forgeries; by John T. Lester. Ditto.
- Strindberg, the Man, Discussed by His Widow; by A. P.—Ditto.
- Managers vs. Critics. Ditto.
- The Greatest of the Three Arts of Russia; by Clayton Hamilton. *Vogue*, April 1st.
- Another Proposed Union. *Vanity Fair*, April.
- The Critics and the Russian Ballet; by F. M. Colby. Ditto.
- Tough Lines for Critics; by P. G. Woodhouse. Ditto.
- Serge De Diaghileff; by R. L. Cottenet. Ditto.
- Can Shakespeare Withstand the Storm? by Herbert Vaughn Abbott. *Outlook*, April 19th.
- The Movies; *Harper's Weekly*, April 14th.
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- Movies Destroy Art; by Charles E. Whittaker. Ditto.
- Movies Create Art; by Maurice Tournour. Ditto.
- On Shakespeare; by G. K. Chesterton. Ditto, April 20th.
- The Best Way to Celebrate the Shakespeare Tercentenary. *The Dial*, April 13th.
- Baconian Methods of Controversy; by William Dallam Annes. Ditto, April 22nd.
- Is Bacon Not Shake-speare? By Harold S. Howard. Ditto.
- The Humanism of Shakespeare; by Stuart P. Sherman. *The Nation*, April 20th.
- The Dialects of Our Stage. *Literary Digest*, April 1st.
- Limning Shakespeare. Ditto, April 15th.
- Shakespeare's Views on Immortality. Ditto.
- Reminiscences of Tommaso Salvini; by Hugo Ballin. *Bruno's Weekly*, April 15th.
- A Defense (?) of Vaudeville; by W. V. Richberg. Ditto, April 22nd.
- Mysteries of Movie Making. *Illustrated World*, May.
- The Life of Charles Frohman (serial); by Daniel Frohman and Isaac F. Marcossan. *Cosmopolitan*, May.
- The Aliens*, a one-act play; by Charles H. Towne. *McClure's*, May.

Edwin Booth as I Knew Him; by Edwin M. Boyle, Harper's Monthly, May.

Christopher Marlowe; by Algernon C. Swinburne. North American Review, May.

The Winter's Tale; by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Ditto.

Shakespearean Reverberations and the Doings of Sir Herbert Tree; by Lawrence Gilman. Ditto.

The Magical City, a one-act play; by Zoe Aikens. The Forum, May.

Remy de Gourmont's Criticism of Morality; by Robert A. Parker. Ditto.

Dramatic and Theatrical Talent; by Clayton Hamilton. The Bookman, May.

The Art of Charles Chaplin; by Minnie Maddern Fiske. Harper's Weekly, May 6th.

The Great Anniversary Week; by Metcalfe. Life, May 4th.

The Season Has Spring Fever; by Metcalfe. Ditto, May 11th.

Again We Have With Us William Shakespeare; by Metcalfe. Ditto, May 18th.

This Slowly Dying Season; by Metcalfe. Ditto, May 25th.

Was "Shakspeare" "Shakespeare?" by S. A. Tannenbaum. The Dial, May 5th.

Types of Realism in Modern Plays; by Homer E. Woodbridge. Ditto.

Hamlet and the Advancement of Learning; by S. A. Tannenbaum. Ditto, May 25th.

Shakespeare Jeopardized by the Courts. Literary Digest, May 15th.

Shakespeare Indorsed by a Medium. Ditto.

Democratizing Shakespeare. Ditto, May 20th.

Why the Drama Decays. Ditto.

The Slow Growth of Shakespearean Opera. Ditto, May 27th.

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The Washington Square Players. The Nation, June 15th.

Shakespeare as a Bird Fancier. Literary Digest, June 3rd.

The Drama of a War-Time Season. Ditto.

"Humbug" About Shakespeare. Ditto, June 17th.

What Shakespeare Thinks of His Plays; editorial. The Dial, June 8th.

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"Shakspere" vs. "Shakespeare" Again; by E. Basil Lupton. Ditto.

Shakespeare Potpourri; by S. A. Tannenbaum. Ditto.

Grant White's Shakespeare; by H. R. Steeves. Ditto, June 22nd.

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Using the Shakespeare Tercentenary to Awake the Civic Spirit of Cooperation. Current Opinion, June.

A Permanent Theatre for Shakespearean Plays. The Theatre, June.

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Margaret Anglin Heads 1,000 Players; by Ada Patterson. Ditto.

Dramatic Critics and Photoplays; by Alan Dale. Ditto.

Lyn Harding, a versatile player; by Helen Ten Broeck. Ditto.

What's Wrong with the Movies; by Bernard Sobel. Ditto.

A Unique American Playhouse. Ditto.

Manufacturing Stage Laughter; by Burr Chapman Cook. Ditto.

A New Figure in Musical Comedy; by C. P. West. Vanity Fair, June.

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Modern Passion Plays; by Maximilian J. Rudwin. The Open Court, May.

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Something to Say in the Theatre; by Clayton Hamilton.

Reviews of current productions. The Bookman, April.

Erstwhile Susan. Current Opinion, April.

Overtones. The Little Review, April.

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- The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *The Great Pursuit.* Ditto, April 8th.
- Captain Brassbound's Conversion.* Ditto, April 15th.
- Justice.* Ditto, April 22nd.
- The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *The Great Pursuit.* *Life*, April 6th.
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- Justice* and *Rio Grande.* Ditto, April 12th.
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- Justice.* Ditto, April 29th.
- Captain Brassbound's Conversion;* by Q. K. *The New Republic*, April 8th.
- Justice;* by F. H. Ditto, April 15th.
- Erdegeist;* by A. B. K. Ditto, April 22nd.
- Rio Grande;* by Q. K. Ditto, April 29th.
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- The Magical City.* Ditto.
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- The Neighborhood Players. Ditto.
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- The Merry Wives of Windsor.* Ditto, June 8th.
- The Shakespearean Celebrations in London; by William Archer. *The Nation*, June 29th
- The Passing Show of 1916.* Ditto.
- Two Shakespearean Tercentenary Plays; by Homer E. Woodbridge. *The Dial*, June 22nd.
- Molly O,* and review of season; by Metcalfe. *Life*, June 1st.
- The Cinderella Man,* a whimsical variation of a perennial dramatic theme. *Current Opinion*, June.
- A Night at an Inn.* Ditto.
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- The Grotesques;* by Lucy Frances Pierce. Ditto.

- Drama, Melodrama and Tragedy; by P. G. Wodehouse.
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 The Drama of Sensibility (Ernest Bernbaum). Ditto, June 22nd.
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Before me, a Notary in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Theodore B. Hinckley, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the editor of The Drama, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to-wit:

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A QUARTERLY REVIEW



**CERTAIN NOBLE PLAYS
OF JAPAN** by Wm. Butler Yeats

THE KING OF THE JEWS
A Passion Play by Maurice Browne

The Pantomime by Prince Serge Wolkonsky

Re-enter: The Soliloquy by Morris Leroy Arnold

The Actor in England by Arthur Pollock

As to Little Theatres by Broughton Tall

The Popular Drama of Japan, II
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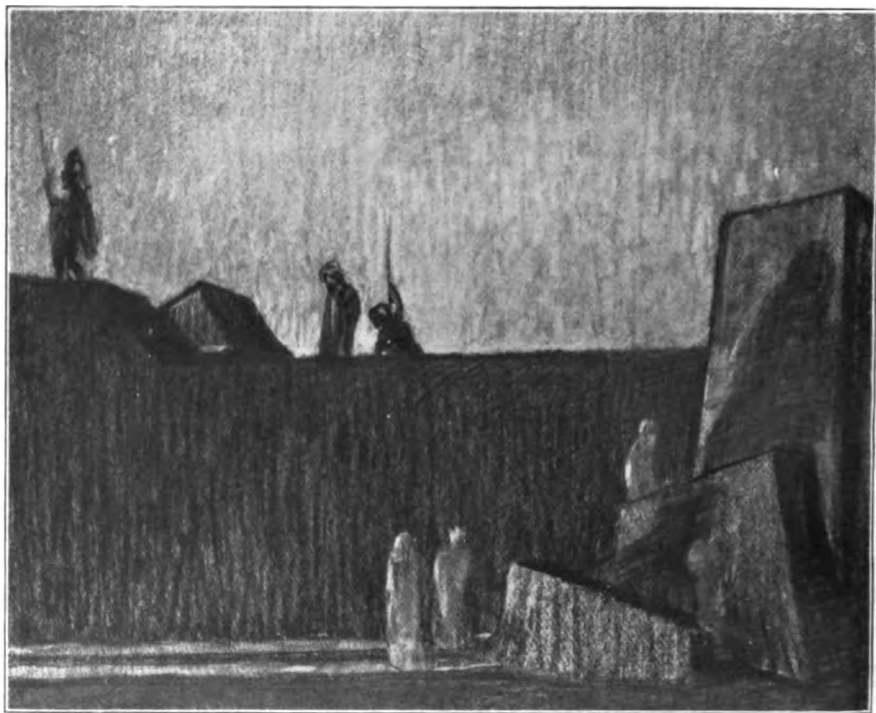
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• DESIGN FOR "THE KING OF THE JEWS," BY C. RAYMOND JOHNSON.
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THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

November, 1916

THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature

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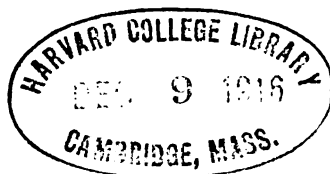
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THE DRAMA

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CERTAIN NOBLE PLAYS OF JAPAN

I



IN the series of books I edit for my sister I confine myself to those that have, I believe, some special value to Ireland, now or in the future. I have asked Mr. Pound for these beautiful plays because I think they will help me to explain a certain possibility of the Irish dramatic movement. I am writing these words with my imagination stirred by a visit to the studio of Mr. Dulac, the distinguished illustrator of the *Arabian Nights*. I saw there the mask and headdress to be worn in a play of mine by the player who will speak the part of Cuchulain and who—wearing this noble half Greek, half Asiatic face—will appear perhaps like an image seen by some Orphic worshipper. I hope to have attained at last the distance from life which can make credible strange events and elaborate words. I have written a little play that can be played in a room for so little money that forty or fifty readers of poetry can pay the price. There will be no scenery, for three musicians whose seeming sun-burned faces will, I hope, suggest that they have

wandered from village to village in some country of our dreams, can describe place and weather and, at moments, action, and accompany it all by drum and gong, or flute and dulcimer. Instead of the players working themselves into a violence of passion indecorous in our sitting room, the music, the beauty of form, and voice all come to climax in pantomimic dance.

In fact, with the help of these plays from the manuscripts of Ernest Fenollosa, chosen and finished by Ezra Pound, I have invented a form of drama, distinguished, indirect and symbolic, without need of mob or newspaper notice to pay its way, an aristocratic form. When this play and its performance run as smoothly as my skill can make them, I shall hope to write another of the same sort and so complete a dramatic celebration of the life of Cuchulain planned long ago. Then having given enough performances for, I hope, the pleasure of personal friends and a few score people of good taste, besides, I shall record all discoveries of method and turn to something else. It is an advantage of this noble form that it need absorb no one's life, that its few properties can be packed up in a box or hung upon the walls where they will be fine ornaments.

II

And yet this simplification is not mere economy. For nearly three centuries invention has been making the human voice and the movements of the body seem always less expressive. I have long been puzzled why passages that are moving when read out or spoken during rehearsal seem muffled or dulled during performance. I have simplified scenery, having *The Hour Glass*, for instance, played now before green curtains, now among those admirable ivory-

coloured screens invented by Gordon Craig; and with every simplification, the voice has recovered something of its importance; and yet when verse has approached in temper to let us say *Kubla Khan* or *The Ode to the West Wind*, the most typical modern verse, I have still felt as if the sound came to me from behind a veil. The stage opening, the powerful light and shade, the number of feet between myself and the players have destroyed intimacy. I have found myself thinking of players who needed perhaps but to unroll a mat in some Eastern garden. Nor have I felt this only when I listened to speech, but even more when I have watched the movement of a player or heard singing in a play. I love all the arts that can still remind me of their origin among the common people, and my ears are only comfortable when the singer sings as if mere speech had taken fire, when he appears to have passed into song almost imperceptibly. I am bored and wretched—a limitation I greatly regret—when he seems no longer a human being but an invention of science. To explain him to myself I say that he has become a wind instrument, and sings no longer like active men, sailor or camel driver, because he has had to compete with an orchestra, where the loudest instrument has always survived. The human voice can only become louder by becoming less articulate, by discovering some new musical sort of roar or scream. As poetry can do neither, the voice must be freed from this competition and find itself among little instruments only heard at their best, perhaps, when we are close about them. It should be again possible for a few poets to write as all did once, not for the printed page, but to be sung. But movement also has grown less expressive, more declamatory, less intimate. When I called the other day upon a friend,

I found myself among some dozen people who were watching a group of Spanish boys and girls, professional dancers, dancing some national dance in the midst of a drawing room. Doubtless their training had been long, laborious, and wearisome, but now—one could not be deceived—their movement was full of joy. They were among friends and all seemed but the play of children; how powerful it seemed, how passionate, and an even more miraculous art, separated from us by the footlights, appeared in the comparison, laborious and professional. It is well to be close enough to an artist to feel for him a personal liking, close enough perhaps to feel that our liking is returned.

My play is made possible by a Japanese dancer whom I have seen dance in a studio and in a drawing room and on a very small stage lit by an excellent stage light. In the studio and in the drawing room alone where the lighting was the light we are most accustomed to, did I see him as the tragic image that has stirred my imagination. There was no studied lighting; no stage picture made an artificial world; he was able, as he rose from the door, where he had been sitting cross-legged, or as he threw out an arm, to recede from us into some more powerful life. Because that separation was achieved by human means alone, he receded but to inhabit as it were the deeps of the mind. One realized anew, at every separating strangeness, that the measure of all arts' greatness can be but in their intimacy.

III

All imaginative art keeps at a distance and this distance once chosen must be firmly held against a pushing world. Verse ritual, music and dance in association with action, require that gesture, cos-

tume, facial expression, and stage argument must help in keeping the door. Our unimaginative arts are content to set a piece of the world as we know it in a place by itself, to put their photograph, as it were, in a plush or a plain frame, but the arts which interest me, while seeming to separate from the world and us a group of figures, images, symbols, enable us to pass for a few moments into a deep of the mind that has hitherto been too subtle for our habitation. As a deep of the mind can only be approached through what is most human, most delicate, we should distrust bodily distance, mechanism, and loud noise.

It may be well if we go to school in Asia, for the distance from life in European art has come from little but difficulty with material. In half Asiatic Greece Kallimachos could still return to a stylistic management of the falling folds of drapery after the naturalistic drapery of Phidias, and in Egypt the same age that saw the village Headman carved in wood for burial in some tomb with so complete a naturalism, saw set up in public places statues full of an august formality that implied traditional measurements, a philosophic defence. The spiritual painting of the fourteenth century passed on into Tintoretto, and that of Velasquez into modern painting, with no sense of loss to weigh against the gain; while the painting of Japan, not having our European moon to churn the wits, has understood that no styles that ever delighted noble imaginations have lost their importance, and chooses the style according to the subject. In literature also we have had the illusion of change and progress, the art of Shakespeare passing into that of Dryden and so into the prose drama by what has seemed, when studied in its details, unbroken progress. Had we been

Greeks and so but half European, an honourable mob would have martyred, though in vain, the first man who set up a painted scene or who complained that soliloquies were unnatural, instead of repeating with a sigh, "We cannot return to the arts of childhood, however beautiful." Only our lyric poetry has kept its Asiatic habit and renewed itself at its own youth, putting off perpetually what has been called its progress, in a series of violent revolutions.

Therefore, it is natural that I go to Asia for a stage convention, for more formal faces, for a chorus that has no part in the action, and perhaps for those movements of the body copied from the marionette shows of the fourteenth century. A mask will enable me to substitute for the face of some commonplace player, or for that face repainted to suit his own vulgar fancy, the fine invention of a sculptor, and to bring the audience close enough to the play to hear every inflection of the voice. A mask never seems *but* a dirty face, and no matter how close you go it remains a work of art; nor shall we often lose by the stillness of the features, for deep feeling is expressed by a movement of the whole body. In poetical painting and in sculpture the face seems the nobler for lacking curiosity, alert attention, all that we sum up under the famous word of the realists "vitality." It is even possible that being is only possessed completely by the dead, and that it is some knowledge of this that makes us gaze with so much emotion upon the face of the Sphinx or Buddha. Who can forget the face of Chaliapin as the Mogul King in *Prince Igor* when a mask covering its upper portion made him seem like a Phoenix at the end of its thousand wise years, awaiting in condescension the burning nest; and what did it not gain from that immobility in dignity and in power?

IV

Realism is created for the common people and was always their peculiar delight, and it is the delight to-day of all those whose minds, educated alone by school-masters and newspapers, are without the memory of beauty and emotional subtlety. The occasional humorous realism that so much heightened the emotional effect of Elizabethan tragedy—Cleopatra's old man with a mask, let us say, carrying the tragic crisis by its contrast above the tide mark of Corneille's courtly theatre—was made at the outset to please the common citizen standing on the rushes of the floor; but the great speeches were written by poets who remembered their patrons in the covered galleries. The fanatic Savonarola was but dead a century, and his lamentations in the frenzy of his rhetoric that every prince of the Church or State throughout Europe was wholly occupied with the fine arts had still its moiety of truth. A poetical passage cannot be understood without a rich memory; like the older school of painting, it appeals to a tradition, not merely when it speaks of "Lethe's Wharf" or "Dido on the wild sea banks" but in rhythm and in vocabulary, for the ear must notice slight variations upon old cadences and customary words, all that high breeding of poetical style where there is nothing ostentatious, nothing crude, no breath of parvenu or journalist.

Let us press the popular arts on to a more complete realism, for that would be their honesty and the commercial arts demoralise by their compromise, their incompleteness, their idealism without sincerity or elegance, their pretence that ignorance can understand beauty. In the studio and in the drawing-room we can found a true theatre of beauty.

Poets from the time of Keats and Blake have derived their descent only through what is least declamatory, least popular in the art of Shakespeare, and in such a theatre they will find their habitual audience and keep their freedom. Europe is now very old and has seen many arts run through the circle, has learned the fruit of every flower and known what this fruit sends up. It is time to copy the East and live deliberately.

V

“Ye shall not, while ye tarry with me, taste
From unrinsed barrel the diluted wine
Of a low vineyard or a plant ill-pruned,
But such as anciently the Aegean Isles
Poured in libation at their solemn feasts:
And the same goblets shall ye grasp, emboss’d
With no vile figures or loose languid boors,
But such as Gods have lived with and have led.”

The Noh Theatre of Japan became popular at the close of the fourteenth century, gathering into itself dances performed at Shinto shrines in honor of spirits and gods, and much old lyric poetry by young nobles at the court, and receiving its philosophy and its final shape, perhaps, from priests of the contemplative Buddhism. A small daimio or feudal lord of the ancient capital Nara, a contemporary of Chaucer’s, was the author or perhaps only the stage manager of many plays. He brought them to the court of the Shogun at Kyoto. From that on, the Shogun and his court were as busy with dramatic poetry as the Mikado and his with lyric. When for the first time *Hamlet* was being played in London, Noh was made a necessary part of official ceremonies at Kyoto, and young nobles and princes, forbidden to attend the popular theatre, in Japan as elsewhere

a place of mimicry and naturalism, were encouraged to witness and to perform in spectacles where speech, music, song, and dance created an image of nobility and strange beauty. When the modern revolution came, Noh, after a brief unpopularity, was played for the first time in certain ceremonious public theatres, and in 1897 a battleship was named Takasago, after one of the most famous plays. Some of the old noble families are to-day very poor, their men it may be but servants and laborers, but they still frequent the Noh theatres. "Accomplishment," the word means, and it is their accomplishment and that of a few cultivated people who understand the literary and mythological allusions and the ancient lyrics quoted in speech or chorus; an accomplishment and a discipline, a part of their breeding. The players themselves, unlike the despised players of the popular theatres, have passed proudly from father to son an elaborate art, and even now a player will publish his family tree to prove his skill. One player wrote in 1906 in a business circular—I am quoting from Mr. Pound's redaction of the notes of Fenollosa—that after thirty generations of nobles a woman of his house dreamed that a mask was carried to her from Heaven; and soon after she bore a son, who became a player and the father of players. His family, he declared, still possessed a letter from a fifteenth century Mikado, conferring upon them a theatre-curtain, white below and purple above.

There were five families of these players, who, forbidden before the Revolution to perform in public, had received grants of land or salaries from the state. The white and purple curtain was no doubt to hang upon a wall behind the players or over their entrance door, for the Noh stage is a platform surrounded upon three sides by the audience. No nat-

uralistic effect is sought. The players wear masks and found their movements upon those of puppets—the most famous of all Japanese dramatists composed entirely for puppets—a swift or a slow movement and a long or short stillness, and then another movement. They sing as much as they speak and there is a chorus which describes the scene and interprets their thought and never becomes, as in the Greek theatre, a part of the action. At the climax, instead of the disordered passion of nature, there is a dance, a series of positions and movements which may represent a battle or a marriage or the pain of a ghost in the Buddhist purgatory. I have lately studied certain of these dances with Japanese players, and I notice that their ideal of beauty, unlike that of Greece, and like that of the pictures of Japan and China, makes them pause at moments of muscular tension. The interest is not in the human form—but in the rhythm to which it moves, and the triumph of their art is to express the rhythm in its intensity. There are few swaying movements of arms or body—such as make the beauty of our dancing. They move from the hip, keeping almost still the upper part of their body, and seeming to associate with every gesture or pose some definite thought. They cross the stage with a sliding movement and one gets the impression, not of undulation, but of continuous straight lines.

As the Print Room of the British Museum is now closed as a war economy, I can only write from memory of colour prints—of a stage where a ship is represented by a mere skeleton of willows or ozers painted green, or a fruit tree by a bush in a pot, and where actors have tied on their masks with ribbons that are gathered into a bunch behind the head. It is a child's game become the most noble poetry.

There is no observation of life because the poet would set before us all those things which we feel and imagine in silence.

Mr. Pound has found among the Fenollosa manuscripts a story traditional among Japanese players. A young man was following a stately old woman through the streets of a Japanese town, and presently she turned to him and spoke:—"Why do you follow me?" "Because you are so interesting." "That is not so; I am too old to be interesting." But he wished, he told her, to become a player of old women on the Noh stage and was studying her. "If you would become famous as a Noh player," she said, "you must not observe life. You must not put on an old voice and stint the music of your speech. You must know how to suggest the old woman and yet find it all in the heart."

VI

In the plays themselves I discover a beauty or a subtlety that I can trace perhaps to their threefold origin. The love sorrows, the love of father and daughter, of mother and son, of boy and girl, may owe their poignancy to a court, but he to whom the adventures happen, a traveller commonly from some distant place, is most often a Buddhist priest; and the occasional intellectual subtlety is perhaps Buddhist. The adventure itself is often the meeting with ghost, god or goddess at some holy place or much-legended tomb; and god, goddess or ghost remind me at times of our own Irish legends and beliefs—which once it may be, differed little from those of the Shinto worshipper. The feather mantle for whose lack the moon goddess—or should we call her fairy?—cannot return to the sky is the red cap whose theft can keep our fairies of the sea upon dry

land; and the ghost lovers in *Nishikigi* remind me of the Aran boy and girl who in Lady Gregory's story come to the priest after death to be married. These Japanese poets, too, feel for tomb and wood the emotion, the sense of awe, that our Gaelic speaking country people will sometimes show when you speak to them of Cric mau or of some Holy Well; and that is why, perhaps, it pleases them to begin so many plays with a traveller asking his way with many questions, a convention agreeable to me, for when I first began to write poetical plays for an Irish theatre, I had to put away an ambition of helping to bring again to certain places their own sanctity or their romance. I could lay the scene of a play "on Baile's Strand," but I found no pause in the hurried action for description of strand or sea, or the great yew tree that once stood there, and I could not in *The King's Threshold* find room, before I began the ancient story, to call up the shallow river, and the fir trees and rocky fields of modern Gort. But in the *Nishikigi*, the tale of the lovers would lose its pathos if we did not see that forgotten tomb where "the hiding fox" lives among "the orchids and the chrysanthemum flowers." The men who created this convention were more like ourselves than were the Greeks and Romans, more like us even than were Shakespeare and Corneille. Their emotion was self-conscious and reminiscent, always associating itself with pictures and poems. They measured all that time had taken or would take away and found their delight in remembering celebrated lovers in the scenery pale passion loved. They travelled, seeking for the strange and for the picturesque:—"I go about with my heart set upon no particular place . . . no more than a cloud. . . . I wonder now would the sea be that way, or the little place Kefu that they

say is stuck down against it." When a traveller asks his way of girls upon the roadside, he is directed to find it by certain pine trees, which he will recognise because many people have drawn them.

I wonder am I fanciful in discovering in the plays themselves—few examples have as yet been translated and I may be misled by accident or the idiosyncrasy of some poet—a playing upon a single metaphor, as deliberate as the echoing rhythm of line in Chinese and Japanese painting. In the *Nishikigi* the ghost of the girl lover carries the cloth she went on weaving out of grass when she should have opened the chamber door to her lover, and woven grass returns again and again in metaphor and incident. The lovers, now that in an aery body they must sorrow for unconsummated love, are "tangled up as the grass patterns are tangled." Again they are like an unfinished cloth: "these bodies, having no weft, even now are not come together, truly a shameful story, a tale to bring shame on the gods." Before they can bring the priest to the tomb they spend the day "pushing aside the grass from the overgrown ways in Kefu," and the countryman who directs them is "cutting grass on the hill," and when at last the prayer of the priest unites them in marriage, the bride says that he has made "a dream-bridge over wild grass, over the grass I dwell in," and in the end bride and bridegroom show themselves for a moment "from under the shadow of the love grass."

In *Hagoromo* the feather mantle of the fairy woman creates also its rhythm of metaphor. In the beautiful day of opening spring "the plumage of Heaven drops neither feather nor flame," "nor is the rock of earth over-much worn by the brushing of the feathery skirt of the stars." One half-remembers a thousand Japanese paintings, whichever

comes first into the memory—that screen painted by Korin, let us say, shown lately at the British Museum, where the same form is echoing in wave and in cloud and in rock. In European poetry I remember Shelley's continually repeated fountain and cave, his broad stream and solitary star. In neglecting character, which seems to us essential in drama, the writers of Noh resemble the artists who by arranging flowers in a vase in a thin row and neglecting relief and depth have made possible a hundred lovely intricacies.

VII

These plays arose in an age of continual war and became a part of the education of soldiers. These soldiers, whose natures had as much of Walter Pater as of Achilles, combined with Buddhist priests and women to elaborate life into a ceremony; the playing of ball, the drinking of tea, and all great events of state, becoming a ritual. In the painting that decorated their walls and in the poetry they recited, one discovers the only sign of a great age that cannot deceive us, the most vivid and subtle discrimination of sense and the invention of images more powerful than sense—the continual presence of reality. It is still true that the Deity gives us, according to his promise, not his thoughts or his convictions, but his flesh and blood, and I believe that the elaborate technique of the arts, seeming to create out of itself a superhuman life, has taught more men to die than oratory or the Prayer Book. We believe only in those thoughts which have been conceived not in the brain but in the whole body. The Minoan soldier who bore upon his arm the shield ornamented with the dove, now in the Museum at Crete, or had upon his head the helmet with the winged horse, knew his rôle in life. Nobuzane painting the child saint, Kobo

Daishi kneeling full of sweet austerity upon the flower of the lotus, set up before our eyes exquisite life and the acceptance of death.

I cannot imagine those young soldiers and the women they loved pleased with the ill-breeding and theatricality of Carlyle, nor, I think, with the magniloquence of Hugo—these things belong to an industrial age, a mechanical sequence of ideas; but when I remember that curious game which the Japanese called with a confusion of the senses that had seemed typical of our own age, “listening to incense,” I know that some among them would have understood the prose of Walter Pater, the painting of Puvis de Chavannes, the poetry of Mallarmé and Verlaine. When heroism returned to our age, it bore with it as its first gift—technical sincerity.

VIII

For some weeks now I have been elaborating my play in London, where alone I can find the help I need—Mr. Dulac’s mastery of design and Mr. Ito’s genius of movement; yet it pleases me to think that I am working for my own country. Perhaps some day a play in the form I am adapting for European purposes, shall awake once more, whether in Gaelic or in English, under the slope of Slieve-na-Mon or Croagh Patrick, ancient memories, for this form has no need of scenery that runs away with money, nor of a theatre building. Yet I know that I only amuse myself with a fancy, for though my writings if they be seaworthy must put to sea, I cannot tell where they may be carried by the wind. Are not the fairy stories of Oscar Wilde, which were written for Mr. Ricketts and Mr. Shannon and for a few ladies, very popular in Arabia?

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

THE KING OF THE JEWS

A PASSION PLAY

PERSONS OF THE PLAY IN THE ORDER OF THEIR APPEARANCE

A sentry.

An executioner.

Three condemned persons.

Guards with their captain.

MARY.

Five Galilean women.

CAIAPHAS.

JUDAS.

PONTIUS PILATE and his attendants.

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THE KING OF THE JEWS

[The scene is the foot of Calvary before dawn. The action of the play occupies an entire day, the passage of time being marked by the choric interludes.]

[The sentry is at his post. The executioner, the three condemned persons, and their guards enter from the city.]

SENTRY. Halt. Who goes there?

EXECUTIONER. A thief, a pimp, and a madman; three gibbets, a hammer and sundry nails; little Ladybird, at your service; and the captain of the guard, God bless him, a-bringing up the rear of the parade.

CAPTAIN. Now, then, get on there.

EX. Yes, Captain. No offence, Captain. Git up, you swine. *[To sentry.]* Blasted cold morning. Blasted cold morning, I said. Well, you needn't be so damned surly.

[They go out toward Calvary. MARY enters from the city.]

SENTRY. Now then, mother, what do *you* want?—No, you can't go by there. Governor's orders. No; it's against orders, I tell you. Eh? What's that you say? Your son? Well, I can't help that. Orders is orders. Your only son? Yes, that's a bit thick, but I have my instructions. Yes, I know, but. . . . Now you keep a stiff upper lip, mother. I can't let you by: it's as much as my job is worth. Yes, I

know, I know. My old woman, she used to.....
Look here, mother, you go and sit over there. Then
you can see him, anyhow.

*[The Galilean women enter from the city, chanting
in antiphony.]*

CHORUS. He is despised and rejected of men:
A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
And we hid as it were our faces from him:
He was despised, and we befriended him not.
He is oppressed, and he is afflicted:
Yet hath he opened not his mouth.
He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter:
And as a sheep before her shearers he is dumb.
He is taken as a lamb of sacrifice:
They have led the lamb of God to the place of blood.
They have taken him from prison and from judgment:
They have taken away my Lord and have set him up
on high.
He is stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted:
He hath made his grave with the wicked, and with the
evildoers in his death.
Yet hath he done no violence, neither is there any
deceit in his mouth:
He is wounded for our transgressions, he is bruised
for our iniquities.
He is cut off out of the land of the living; for the
transgression of my people is he stricken:
All we like sheep have gone astray; and the Lord
hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

[The executioner enters.]

Ex. Well, that's done. Bloody job. On a cold
morning, too. That bloke in the middle. Like a
blasted sheep. It ain't no fun stringing 'em up,

unless they struggles a bit. What I wants to know is—[*He stumbles against MARY.*] Now, then, old 'un; look where you're going, can't you? What d'you want, taking up all the—

SENTRY. That's his mother.

EX. His mother? Whose mother? Godmother! What the sniffing Hebrew does *she* want sitting over the place like a bloody mushroom?

SENTRY. *His* mother.

EX. What? that bloke's? the struck sheep?—Beg your pardon, mum. No offence meant.—Well, why can't she say something? I asked her pardon, didn't I?—Well, of all the.....Sanguinary old image. What I wants to know is why the—Well, you *are* a surly swine. Calls yourself a Roman? Pink-faced son of a gory lobster. Pink whiskered orphan of a green cockatoo. Calls hisself a Roman? I'd make a better Roman than him out o' potato peelings and an old shoelace. I'd make a better Roman out of a bit o' string and a dead bluebottle. Calls hisself a Roman? Roman! You calls yourself a—[*Seeing the Galilean women.*] Hello girls. Didn't see *you* before. Taking a morning promenade? Sort o' sunrise saunter, what? Guess I'm the early worm, all right. Gobble, chickens.—Well, can't you give a fellow a civil answer? Ain't none of you got a tongue in your heads? Well, of all the.....Strike me purple. Sanguinary set of images. What's the use o' trying to be pleasant? Suppose you think you're on a purple pedestal, eh? Sort o' meet me by moonlight alone in the Emperor's art gallery, eh? [*CAIAPHAS enters from the city.*] With a gilt frame, and a swell to show you round, and a la-di-da Greek guy to—Beg your pardon, my lord.

CAIAPHAS. Is your work done?

EX. Yes, my lord. Till sunset.

CALAPHAS. Then go. [*The executioner goes.*] [*To MARY.*] Now, then, my good woman, what are you doing here? Don't you know you have no business—

SENTRY. Begging your pardon, my lord. That's his mother, my lord.

CALAPHAS. His mother?—Ah. Yes. Just so. Just so. Dear me. Dear me. Well.....Well.....You may stay where you are.—Very unfortunate. Yes. Too bad. Too bad. Has everything been carried out properly?

SENTRY. Yes, my lord.

CALAPHAS. That's right. No—disturbance of any kind? No—rioting?

SENTRY. None, my lord.

CALAPHAS. No, of course not. Of course not. Where is—where are—the—malefactors?

SENTRY. There, my lord.

CALAPHAS. How very unpleasant. Yes. I see. Dear me; it is really most unfortunate. The whole affair is most regrettable. I deplore violence. But the sanctity of the Church.....and the dignity of the Law.....require.....at all costs.....certainly. At all costs. Otherwise Society.....No, of course it would never do. But it makes me very unhappy: very sad. That poor woman too: her son. Dear, dear.

SENTRY. Her only son too, my lord—

CALAPHAS. No, no—

SENTRY. So she said.

CALAPHAS. Not really? You don't say so. How—how very unfortunate. And those other.....those two other men.....They must have mothers too?

SENTRY. Don't know, my lord.

CALAPHAS. No, no. Naturally not. Poor people. The ways of God are inscrutable.

SENTRY. Yes, my lord.

CALAPHAS. Did you ever.....did you know thisthis poor woman's son, this.....Jesus?

SENTRY. Heard him speak once, my lord. Down in the city it was, five or six days ago.

CALAPHAS. Yes?

SENTRY. Just come into the city, my lord. So they said. Him and a lot of his followers. Galileans they called 'em.

CALAPHAS. He came from Galilee.

SENTRY. Yes, my lord, that's what they called 'em, Galileans. Poor folk they was, fishers and the like, but very happy, my lord, all singing and laughing and waving boughs and throwing flowers. Very happy. All except him, my lord.

CALAPHAS. Yes?

SENTRY. A sad sort of look he had, my lord. Solemn. You'd have said he knew what was laying up for him. Very sad and very quiet he was, but smiling a little.

CALAPHAS. Smiling?

SENTRY. Yes, my lord. A queer sort of a smile. Gentle like. As much as to say, "Let 'em be happy while they can." I reckon he knew all right. Yes, I reckon he knew.

CALAPHAS. And then?

SENTRY. Then they all went up the steps of the temple, my lord, cheering him. Laughing and singing they was, and dancing. And he stood there. And then they all began shouting, calling for him to speak. But he just stood there. Strange, that way he smiled. I guess he knew something.

CALAPHAS. Well?

SENTRY. Yes, my lord. And then someone shouted out very loud—that Judas it was, my lord, the fellow they say betrayed him. That was a low-down trick,

if you'll pardon me for being so free, my lord; a dirty trick—if he did it. But somehow it's hard to believe as how he did: there was a light that day in his eyes; all bright and shining they was, like as if he'd seen something. A fine upstanding young fellow he was too, with red hair, and so glad and proud he seemed you'd have said he—

CAIAPHAS. What did he shout, this.....what did you say his name was?—this.....Judas?

SENTRY. Yes, my lord. Judas, that's his name. Iscariot they called him.

CAIAPHAS. From Kerioth.

SENTRY. Yes, my lord. That's what they called him, Iscariot. A fine lad he was, very free in his manners, a gentleman as you might say, tossing his head, and laughing, and with that light in his eyes.

CAIAPHAS. What was it he shouted?

SENTRY. Yes, my lord. It was like this. There that Jesus stood,—him that's hanging there now,—up on top of the steps. And all the rest was down below him, shouting and cheering and waving their hands and holding up the little tots to see. And this Judas he come pushing through the crowd,—not rough, my lord, but masterful like, as you might say,—and stood on the step below Jesus, holding out both his hands, and with such a look on his face,—radiant you might say it was, my lord; and this Jesus, he put out his hands, and took both the hands of Judas. And when that Jesus' hands took his, that Judas he just caught hold of 'em like as if he'd never let 'em go, and—would you believe it, my lord?—all of a sudden he dropped to his knees and started kissing the hands of Jesus; and all the people shouted themselves hoarse, and threw up their caps, and cheered louder than ever. And—

CAIAPHAS. Yes, but what did this Judas shout?

SENTRY. That's what I'm telling you, my lord; for this Judas, he jumped to his feet, and threw his arms up, and shouted louder than 'em all, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

CAIAPHAS. Ah.

SENTRY. That's what he shouted, my lord. And then—

CAIAPHAS. That was it.

SENTRY. And then, my lord—

CAIAPHAS. And for that they crucified him. For blasphemy and sedition.

SENTRY. But it was Judas, my lord, who—

CAIAPHAS. It was Jesus whom they crucified.—I have been interested in your story, my man, but you must not forget that this Jesus, this malefactor hanging here, was found guilty of sedition and of blasphemy. And for that he was—very properly—crucified.

SENTRY. Yes, my lord, I know that was what the judges said, but.....

CAIAPHAS. Well?

SENTRY. I hope you'll pardon me for being so free, my lord?

CAIAPHAS. Go on.

SENTRY. Well, it's like this, my lord. After this Judas had shouted.....well, what I told you just now, my lord, Jesus, he lifted up his hand, and all the people fell silent at once, and he began to speak to them.

CAIAPHAS. Jesus?

SENTRY. Yes, my lord. Very gentle his voice was, very gentle, but strong too,—authoritative, as you might say. You could tell that by the way the people listened to him.

CAIAPHAS. Go on.

SENTRY. It put me in mind of the sea, his voice did. On a calm day. When the little ripples hardly seems to break on the shore, but you know there's all the power of the tides behind 'em, moving there, moving. *He* put me in mind of a woman, he did, so quiet he stood there, and smiling, and sorrowful.

CAIAPHAS. What did he say?

SENTRY. I can hear his voice now, as you might say. So still it was. "My kingdom is not of earth,"—that's what he said, my lord. "My kingdom is not of earth." That's why I don't see how the judges—

CAIAPHAS. It is not your business to see.

SENTRY. No, my lord, of course not. The judges know best. But that's what he said.

"My kingdom is not of earth. Come unto me,
All ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I
Will give you rest."

CAIAPHAS. That will do.

SENTRY. Yes, my lord. I hope you'll pardon me for being so free, my lord. But he had a way with him, that Jesus.

CAIAPHAS. A way which led there.

SENTRY. Yes, my lord. The judges knew best, of course.—Begging your pardon, my lord, but there's a man coming up the hill there from the city. It looks like. . . . why, it's that Judas, my lord, him as I've been telling you about.

CAIAPHAS. Ah, really?

SENTRY. Yes, it's him sure enough. A dirty dog, if what they says is true. But there was a light in his eyes that day—

CAIAPHAS. I will speak to this Judas myself. You may return to your duties.

SENTRY. Yes, my lord. I hope you'll pardon me for being so free, my lord. I didn't mean—

CAIAPHAS. There is no harm done.

SENTRY. Thank you, my lord.

CAIAPHAS. You may stay within call.

SENTRY. Yes, my lord. Thank you, my lord.

[*The sentry goes out toward Calvary. JUDAS enters from the city.*]

CAIAPHAS. You have come for payment?—I asked
If you had come for payment.

JUDAS. I have come

For payment.

CAIAPHAS. Here is the price agreed.

JUDAS. The price

Agreed.

CAIAPHAS. You had better count it.

JUDAS. Count the price,

Yes, I am counting it. One—two—three—four—

One—two—three—four—

CAIAPHAS. Count carefully.

JUDAS. There are

Thirty pieces of silver.

CAIAPHAS. The price agreed.

JUDAS. There are thirty pieces of silver here in
my hand.

CAIAPHAS. That was the price agreed.

JUDAS. Thirty pieces

Of silver.

CAIAPHAS. Payment is made.

JUDAS. Payment is made.—

You lie.

CAIAPHAS. I—

JUDAS. Payment is not made.

CAIAPHAS. It is in your hand.

JUDAS. Payment is in my hand.

There are thirty pieces of silver in my hand.

CAIAPHAS. The price agreed.

JUDAS. Payment is not made.

CAIAPHAS. You need not ask for more. You will
get no more.

Understand that. You will get no more than the price
Agreed: thirty pieces of silver.

JUDAS. I came

For payment.

CAIAPHAS. You have had your payment.

JUDAS. I came

For payment.

CAIAPHAS. You have your payment there in your
hand:

Thirty pieces of silver. That is all you will get.

Understand clearly. It is useless to ask for more.

You had better take your payment and go.

JUDAS. I came

To pay.

CAIAPHAS. To pay? What do you mean?

JUDAS. I came

To make payment.

CAIAPHAS. I do not understand.

JUDAS. You do not understand.

CAIAPHAS. I have no wish

To be harsh with you. You have done what you had
to do.

JUDAS. I have done what I had to do.

CAIAPHAS. You have done it well,

And you have done well. I am satisfied. But this

Talk of payment with the money in your hand,

Thirty pieces of silver, the price agreed,

Is quite unprofitable. And, while I have

No wish to be harsh, I must really ask you to go

Now, if you please.

JUDAS. Where?

CAIAPHAS. How should I know

Where you are going?

JUDAS. Yet you should know.

CAIAPHAS. If you do not go at once, I will call the guard.

JUDAS. Does he do what he has to do? Does he do it well?

CAIAPHAS. He will do what I tell him. He is there within call.

JUDAS. [*Seeing the crucified.*] O my God. Yes, he has done it well.

CAIAPHAS. Now will you go?

JUDAS. He has done it better than I.

CAIAPHAS. What do you mean?

JUDAS. What is this in my hand?

CAIAPHAS. The price agreed.

JUDAS. Thirty.....

Thirty pieces of silver.

The price of—

Ah.....[*He lets the money fall.*]

Now I remember.

CAIAPHAS. Ho, guard! guard! quick!

[*The sentry enters.*]

Watch that man. He—

I think perhaps he is mad.

Speak to him.

You had better tell him to go.

SENTRY. Now, then, sir, you can't stay here, you know. Wake up, sir, wake up.—He seems in some kind of a trance, my lord.

CAIAPHAS. Dear me, dear me. How very unfortunate. This is really most distressing. I hardly know.....Pick up that money, please.—Really, I am quite at a loss.....Such an attractive looking lad.....And that poor woman, too.....Dreadful. Dreadful. If I thought—Oh no, no, no. That would never do.....Inscrutable are thy ways, O Lord.

SENTRY. [*With money.*] My lord.

CAIAPHAS. Give it to him.

SENTRY.—He doesn't take it, my lord.

[PILATE enters from the city, attended.]

CAIAPHAS. Well.....well.....Perhaps you had better give it to me.—One, two, three, four..... One—two—three—four.....There are only twenty-nine pieces of silver here. There should be thirty.

SENTRY. Thirty, my lord? Perhaps.....It may have rolled away.

CAIAPHAS. That is possible.

SENTRY. Ah, here it is, my lord.

CAIAPHAS. Ah. That is satisfactory. Thank you. Thank you.—What is it?—

Oh, your excellency.....I had not—observed.....

PILATE. I fear I interrupted your accounts.

It is apt to happen in Jerusalem.

Let that be my excuse.—Who is this man?

CAIAPHAS. Judas, your excellency.

PILATE. Ah. He is ill.—

This woman?

CAIAPHAS. Some—peasant, your excellency.

Really I do not.....Some poor old.....A tramp, perhaps.

PILATE. Who is this woman?

CAIAPHAS. His mother, your excellency.

The mother of Jesus.

PILATE. Has all been carried out

As ordered?

CAIAPHAS. Yes, your excellency.

SENTRY. Yes sir.

PILATE. [To MARY.] Madam, you would be wiser not to wait

Here. For your own sake. And for his.—

[To sentry.]

Set water by her.

[The sentry sets water by MARY.]

PILATE. [*To the sentry and the attendant.*] You may go. [*The sentry and attendants go out towards Calvary.*]

[*To CAIAPHAS.*]

My lord,

What does this mean?

CAIAPHAS. I assure you, your excellency,
I am altogether—

JUDAS. One—two—three—four—
Drop after drop—
Why are they not white?
Silver should be white.
But these are red.
They are red like gold.
They are redder than gold.
They are red like—

One—two—three—four—
The cowards!
How they slunk away:
Slinking like dogs:
The chosen people.
Not one of them—not one—
Yes: Peter.
Peter drew his sword:
The only man among them.
But he sheathed it again,
When he bade him.
He bade him.

One—two—three—four—
What was it he said?
“Before the cock crow”.....
Peter!
Not one of them.

We were fifty thousand:
Fifty thousand Jews in Jerusalem.
And they had one legion:
One:
Scarcely a thousand men.
Fifty thousand: fifty thousand.
And not one of them.....

PILATE. I begin to understand.

JUDAS. Ah, do you understand?
He did not understand,
With his white hands and his soft throat,
He did not understand.
I have come to pay, sir. I have come to pay.
To the last farthing.

CALAPHAS. Your excellency, had I better not call
the guard?

PILATE. Stand back, my lord. I understand this
man.

JUDAS. Yes, I think you understand.
And you do not smile.
He smiles: he is always smiling.
But he is not glad:
He is frightened:
The high priest of Israel:
Of the chosen people.
Are you frightened?

PILATE. Am I a Jew?

JUDAS. I am a Jew,
And I am not frightened.
I used not to be frightened.

PILATE. Listen to me. His own
Nation and the chief priests delivered him
To me. His people delivered him to me.

JUDAS. I trusted that it had been he
Who should have redeemed Israel.

PILATE. You are a Jew and, as I think, a Jew
Who loves his country. They, as you have found,
Are rare. You have been plotting. Well, the plot
Ends; as all plots against Rome end.
Rome rules.

CAIAPHAS. Your excellency knows
We have no king but Caesar.

PILATE. I do not think
You have been plotting against Rome, my lord.
Without Rome it might be that Caiaphas
Were not high priest of Israel.

CAIAPHAS. You are
Unjust, your excellency. If you had let
This man go, you had not been Caesar's friend.
"Whoever makes himself a king," your law—
Rome's law—says, "Whosoever makes himself
A king, speaks against Caesar."

PILATE. You brought this man to me, as one that
had
Perverted the people. And I examined him
Before you, and I found no fault in him
Touching those things whereof he was accused
By you. I found no cause of death in him.
I found in him no fault at all. And you
Took him and crucified him. Behold the man.
I am innocent of the blood of this just man.
See ye to it.

CAIAPHAS. His blood be upon us
And on our children. Pilate, if he had
Not been a malefactor, we would not have
Delivered him up to you.

JUDAS. I trusted that it had been he
Who should have redeemed Israel.

CAIAPHAS. Israel does not need redeeming, sir.
The Lord of Hosts is with us.

JUDAS. I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.

CAIAPHAS. What is that to us? See thou to that.

PILATE. Gently, my lord. Though this man is a Jew,

He has, it seems, some Roman qualities,
And may learn others. He may learn the first
And last and only duty of a man,
Respect for law: the law that made and keeps
Caiaphas priest of Israel; the law
That nailed this Galilean to that cross;
The law that set me here to guard the law;
The law of Rome.

CAIAPHAS. There is another law,
Pilate, beside the law of Rome, a law
That Rome acknowledges, the law of God,
Our law; and by that law a man should die
Who has blasphemed. That man dying there
Declared himself the son of God; he dies
Justly. The Lord of Hosts does not beget
Sons by a peasant woman in Galilee.

JUDAS. I trusted that it had been he
Who should have redeemed Israel.

PILATE. You are not frightened now, my lord.

CAIAPHAS. I am

Not frightened now. Often the flesh is weak,
And we are all sinful. But the Lord
Reigneth, the Lord of Hosts; and Rome, and you,
Pilate, are in His hands,
Even as Jerusalem is in His hands,
And all Judæa, and this poor broken boy,
And this unhappy woman, and I, and he
Who hangs there dying.

PILATE. My lord, I ask your pardon.
I fear I have misjudged you. Though your law
Is not my law, your God is not my God,

CALAPHAS. It was a Roman said,
 "Truth is mighty and it shall prevail."

[The sentry enters.]

Supply this woman's needs. And summon me,
If necessary.—Shall we go, my lord?

JUDAS. I trusted that it had been he
Who should have redeemed Israel.
I trusted that.....

One—two—three—four—

CHORUS. FIRST WOMAN.

Lovely land where a child I played,
Are thy meadows green as they used to be,
The dancing floor in the woodland glade?
Is the glory still on river and hill,
And the light on the upland pasture still,
And the little stream where the fishers wade,

In Galilee, in Galilee?—

The light on the upland lingers yet,

But the glory is gone from the bending bough;
The shadows lengthen; the sun has set;

Though the grass is green, there is no dance now;
The dancers seem like motes in a dream;

There are no trout left in the little stream.

And my heart is hungry for home, O thou
Whose eyes are wet, whose eyes are wet.—

FIRST WOMAN.

Ichabod, Ichabod, where have they gone,
The dreams and the dances of yesterday?—

SECOND WOMAN.

The glory has gone, has gone. There is none
May call it again. It has passed away.—

FIRST WOMAN.

Call ye never so loudly; call
All together, a last long call.—

ALL THE WOMEN.

I am calling, calling. Come they?

SECOND WOMAN.

There is answer none. There is answer nay,
none.

FIRST WOMAN.

Memory, memory, memory,
Take me and make me a child, for still
I hear the voices calling me,
Over the meadow, behind the hill.—

SECOND WOMAN.

We are even as a sleep, and deep to deep
Calleth in vain in a world of sleep.—

FIRST WOMAN.

But the voices of children haunt the hill

ALL THE WOMEN.

In Galilee, in Galilee.

JUDAS. You understand;
You hanging there
On the cross.
You always understand,
And you smile.
You are not smiling now,
You whom I love
And have crucified;
My king:

My brother :
My beloved.

You know how I love you :
How I loved you and always have loved you,
Jesus : Jesus.
I love you ;
And I have crucified you ;
I : Iscariot ;
I : the traitor ;
I : Judas.
Your body is writhen
With agony.
It is all twisted
And broken.
Your hands are broken
And bloody
With the nails
Driven right through the palms,
Right through,
Into the wood.
The fingers of your hands
Are broken.
They are bleeding
From blows from the hammer.
Your feet
Are not like human feet
Any more :
One on top of the other,
With a great nail right through them,
Right through,
Into the wood :
Your feet
That I have kissed.
Your forehead
Is bleeding and tortured

With the thorns.
The blood has trickled down
Into your eyes.
The joist between your legs
Is filthy with blood
And sweat
And excrement.
You are exposed,
Uncovered:
You, a virgin.
You have—
It is men who do these things
To men?

Is it I who have done this thing;
I: Iscariot;
I: the traitor;
I: Judas;
I: a man; to a man;
To my brother;
To my belovéd;
To my king.

I thought I could force you
To declare yourself king;
King of our people;
King of our country
That we loved:
King of the Jews.
I thought I could force you
By betraying you.
When they came to take you,
I thought,
Then you would raise your hand.
Then, surely, at last, you would raise your hand.
You needed only to raise your hand:

And they would come flocking.
Fifty thousand : fifty thousand.
And Rome had one thousand :
Scarcely one thousand.
It could not fail.
Even if you did not raise your hand,
It could not fail :
They loved you so.
It failed.

It is I who understand now,
Jesus.
I understand why you always smiled at me.
I understand why you did not raise your hand.
I understand
Too late.

“My kingdom is not of earth.”
How often you said it;
And I used to laugh at you :
I laughed at you.
“My kingdom is not of earth.”
And I offered you an earthly kingdom,
I offered you the kingdom of Judæa,
You who had the Kingdom of Heaven
Within you.
I understand now,
Jesus.

It is a little thing that I have betrayed you, Jesus :
A little thing, and it will be forgotten.
You and I will be forgotten, Jesus.
We go down together, unremembered.
But I have betrayed a greater thing than you :
I have betrayed God.
Not the God in you : I could not betray that ;

It could not be betrayed.
I have betrayed the God in myself;
I: Judas: the traitor.

[*To the sentry.*]

Give me that little piece of rope.—
I shall not ask anything of any human being
Any more.—
I thank you.

All is said.
Farewell, you whom I love.
Farewell.

[*He goes out toward the garden.*]

CHORUS.

There is a darkness coming up over the air,
And a wind rising.
My heart is heavy within me:
I am sore troubled.

THE VOICE OF CHRIST.

Verily I say unto thee,
Today thou art with me in paradise.

CHORUS.

Did ye hear a voice far off,
A voice like the sea?
“Today thou art with me in paradise
Verily.”

THE VOICE OF CHRIST.

Father, forgive them;
For they know not what they do.

CHORUS.

O kingly! O crowned with thorns
For a diadem!
“Father, they know not what they do:
Forgive them.”

THE VOICE OF CHRIST. I thirst.

CHORUS.

Behold, there is a darkness coming up over the air,
And a gathering of clouds in the air, and a noise of
winds in the air.

Darkness, darkness, is coming up over the air.

There is a trampling of horses and of chariots; there
is a noise of battle and of rushing waters.

I hear the chariots of the Lord of Hosts: I hear the
rushing waters of the wrath of God.

Hide ye, hide ye, daughters of Jerusalem, from the
wrath of the Most High.

Weep, weep, daughters of Jerusalem, for yourselves
and for your children.

For the veil of the temple is rent in twain, and the
rocks are rent.

The veil of the temple is rent from the top to the bot-
tom, and the earth is opened.

The earth quakes, and the graves give up their dead.

Fall on us, O ye mountains: cover us, O ye hills.

Fall on us, O ye mountains: cover the daughters of
Jerusalem.

Blesséd are the barren, and the paps which never
gave suck.

Blesséd are the barren, and the wombs which never
bare.

Now the brother betrayeth the brother to death, and
the father the son.

And children rise up against their parents, and
friend betrayeth friend.

And many betray one another, and many hate one
another.

And because iniquity aboundeth, the love of many
waxeth cold.

We are hated of all men for his sake.

Take heed to yourselves, daughters of Jerusalem.
For they deliver us up to be afflicted, and they kill us.
Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that
give suck in these days!

For these be the days of vengeance.

THE VOICE OF CHRIST.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

CHORUS.

There is not left one stone upon another, that is not
thrown down.

There are wars and rumours of wars, but the end
is not yet.

For nation riseth against nation, and kingdom
against kingdom.

And there are earthquakes in divers places, and pes-
tilences, and famines.

All these are the beginning of sorrows.

Take heed to yourselves, daughters of Jerusalem.
For they deliver us up to be afflicted, and they kill us.
Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that
give suck in these days!

For these be the days of vengeance.

Now let them that are in Judaea flee to the moun-
tains.

For Jerusalem is compassed with armies, and the
desolation thereof is nigh.

And there is great distress in the land, and wrath
upon this people.

And we fall by the edge of the sword, and are led
away captive into all nations.

And Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles, until
the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Hide ye, hide ye, daughters of Jerusalem, from the
wrath of the Most High.

Weep, weep, daughters of Jerusalem, for yourselves
and for your children.

For in these days there is great tribulation, such as
has not been from the beginning of the world
unto this time;

Signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars,
and upon the earth distress of nations, with
perplexity;

The sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing
them for fear.

And the sun is darkened, and the moon does not give
her light.

And the stars fall from heaven, and the powers of
the heavens are shaken.

Blesséd are the barren, and the paps which never
gave suck.

Blesséd are the barren, and the wombs which never
bare.

MARY.

O man of Galilee,
There is one not barren, one.
And her womb gave birth to thee.
Behold thy mother, my son!

THE VOICE OF CHRIST.

Woman, behold thy son!

CHORUS.

O Son of woman, we hear
Thy benison.
Women, women, over the world:
"Behold thy son!"

THE VOICE OF CHRIST.

Father, into thy hands
I commend my spirit.

CHORUS.

Father, Father of all
Times and lands,

Receive the spirit returning hence,
"Into thy hands."

THE VOICE OF CHRIST.

It is finished.

CHORUS.

Silence has fallen upon the air:

A hush: stillness.

Arise; let us go hence.

All things are accomplished.

[*The EXECUTIONER enters, drunk.*]

EXECUTIONER. There's a nice sort o' sunset for you. What I wants to know is how's a fellow to tell if it's sunset or sunrise or the blasted end o' the world in such a God-forsaken climate. Lightens fit to blind a mole. Thunders fit to wake the dead. If it ain't raining, it's hailing. And if it ain't hailing, it's snowing. And if it ain't snowing, it's as hot as a spider on a gridiron when the cook's in a hurry. Climate! Climate! I'd make a better climate out of a one-eyed camel and a hoary cauliflower. I'd make a better climate out of a . . . Rome . . . and a Saturday night . . . my God. This ain't no place for a Roman on foreign service.—Well if here ain't our old friend Surly-Face. No, that ain't it. Pink-Whiskers. My mistake, Pink-Whiskers. Have a drop o' ginger, Pink-Whiskers, just to show there ain't no ill feeling. You won't, eh? All right, Surly-Face; all the more for little Ladybird.—Holy tadpoles! If there ain't his majesty. Hail, King o' the Jews! Come down and save me, won't you? Come down, old son o' God, and I'll believe you. Seeing's believing. You won't, eh? God ain't saving sonny this afternoon! Never you mind, your majesty; I'm coming; Little Ladybird's coming, hammer and all. We won't be long now.

[CAIAPHAS and PILATE enter, attended.]

Beg your pardon, my lord. Beg your pardon, your excellency. Beg your pardon. Beg all your pardons. Come up, boy. Steady. Steady. [*He goes out toward Calvary.*]

PILATE. [*To the first attendant.*]
Arrest that man, and, when his work is done,
Bring him to me for judgment.

[*The first attendant goes out toward Calvary.*]

Where is Judas?

SENTRY.
He went that way, sir.—I think that he
Has hanged himself.

PILATE. So soon?

[*He looks out across the garden.*]

[*To the second attendant.*] Cut him down
And give him burial.

[*The second attendant goes out through the garden.*]

[*To the third attendant.*] Bring me a scroll.

[*The third attendant goes out.*]

The storm is over.

[*Looking toward Calvary.*]
I marvel that he is already dead.

[*The third attendant returns with a scroll.*]

[*To the third attendant.*] Write,
In Latin, and in Hebrew, and in Greek:
“Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.”

[*The attendant writes.*]

Nail it upon the cross above his head.

CAIAPHAS.

Write not "King of the Jews," but that he said,
"I am King of the Jews."

PILATE.

What I have written,

I have written.

[*The attendant goes out with the scroll toward
Cavalry.*]

Behold your King!

CAIAPHAS.

We have

No king but Caesar.

PILATE.

I had power to crucify him, and I had power
To release him. And he said to me that I
Could have no power against him, except it were
Given me from above: he that delivered him
To me had the greater sin.

CAIAPHAS.

I delivered him

To you.

PILATE.

Did you, my lord? Or did—

Another?

[*To MARY.*] They will bring him to you.

He is yours now.

There is a garden in this place,
And in the garden a new sepulchre.
There lay him.

CAIAPHAS.

Sir, I remember that, while he was yet alive,
He said, "After three days I will rise again."
Command that the sepulchre be made sure
Till the third day, lest his disciples come
By night, and steal him away, and say to the people,
"He is risen from the dead."

PILATE.

You have a watch.

Go your way; make it as sure as you can.

CAIAPHAS. [*To the sentry.*]
Go with these women to the sepulchre;
There seal the stone, and set a watch.

PILATE. He said,
When I asked him if he were a king, "My kingdom
"Is not of earth: if my kingdom were of earth,
"Then would my servants fight."

CAIAPHAS. They have loosed the nails
From his hands. They are lowering him.

PILATE. He said:
"To this end was I born,
"And for this cause came I into the world,
"That I should bear witness unto the truth."

CAIAPHAS. They have loosed
The nail from his feet.

PILATE. He said,
"Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice."
The truth.....

CAIAPHAS. They have lowered him to the ground.

PILATE. What
Is truth?

CAIAPHAS. They are wrapping a linen shroud
About him. They have folded him in it.

PILATE. Whence art thou?

CAIAPHAS. Night has fallen, sir.

PILATE. It is well, my lord.

[PILATE and CAIAPHAS go out toward the city. The
Galilean women, with the sentry, go out toward
Calvary, chanting in antiphony.]

CHORUS.
O thou that takest away the sorrows of the world,
Have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sorrows of the world,
Have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sorrows of the world,
Receive our prayer.
In the time of our tribulation, in the hour of death,
and in the day of judgment,
We beseech thee to hear us.
Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us.
Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us.
O thou that takest away the sorrows of the world,
Grant us thy peace.
O thou that takest away the sorrows of the world,
Have mercy upon us.
O Christ, hear us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

MARY.

Man, that is born of woman,
Hath but a short time to live,
And is full of misery.
He cometh up, and is cut down, like a flower;
He fleeth, as it were a shadow.
In the midst of life we are in death;
Of whom may we seek for succour?

We brought nothing into this world,
And it is certain we can carry nothing out.
We fade away suddenly like the grass;
In the morning it is green, and groweth up:
But in the evening it is cut down, dried up, and
withered.
In the midst of life we are in death;
Of whom may we seek for succour?

[*The Galilean women, with the sentry, return from
Calvary bearing the body of JESUS and chanting in
antiphony.*]

CHORUS.

By thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and
passion,

We beseech thee to hear us.

Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us.

O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for thy Name's
sake.

Graciously look upon our afflictions.

With pity behold the sorrows of our hearts.

Favourably with mercy hear our prayers.

O Christ, hear us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord :

Lord, hear my voice.

One deep calleth another :

All thy waves and storms are gone over me.

He is despised and rejected of men :

A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

MARY.

Blesséd are the dead,

For they rest from their labours.

CHORUS.

Earth to earth,

Ashes to ashes,

Dust to dust.

Let this night be solitary ;

Let no joyful voice come therein ;

Because man goeth to his long home,

And the mourners go about the streets.

Vanity of vanities : all is vanity.

Earth to earth,
Ashes to ashes
Dust to dust.

MARY.

I have seen the Son of Man coming in the clouds with
power and great glory.

Why seek ye the living among the dead?
He is not here:
He is risen.

CHORUS.

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away:
Blesséd be the name of the Lord.

MARY.

Why are ye troubled?
Fear not.
Thus it behoved him to suffer,
And to enter into his glory.
In the world we have tribulation;
But be of good cheer:
He hath overcome the world.
Heaven and earth shall pass away,
But my words shall not pass away.

CHORUS.

[*They bear out the body toward the garden, chanting in antiphony.*]

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away:
Blesséd be the name of the Lord.

Lift up your hearts:

We lift them up unto God.

Greater love hath no man than this:

That a man lay down his life for his friends.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our
sorrows:

Our sorrow is turned into joy, and our joy no man
taketh from us.

Break forth into joy: sing together, ye waste places
of Jerusalem:

Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good
will towards men.

SENTRY.

Truly this was a righteous man.

[To MARY.] Mother, bless me also.

[*She turns in the gateway of the garden; he kneels.*]

MARY.

Peace I leave with you:

My peace I give unto you:

The Peace of God,

Which passeth all understanding.

All things must be fulfilled.

This play was made by Maurice Browne, assisted by Ellen Van Volkenburg; and was produced for the first time at the Chicago Little Theatre on June the twentieth, nineteen hundred and sixteen by Maurice Browne, assisted by C. Raymond Johnson, May Donnelly Kelso, Lester Luther, and Ellen Van Volkenburg; played by Loretto Coffield Clarke, Winifred Taylor Entrikin, Helen Head Fivey, Facelia Hamlin, Lou Wall Moore, Helen Robbins, Ellen Van Volkenburg, Louis Alter, Maurice Browne, Knowles Entrikin, A. Gillen, Lester Luther, Raymond Mammes, Jack Martin, George Wolff, and Howard Wookey.

THE PANTOMIME

“Time the measure of all moving is.”

—Sir John Davies (1596)

What is pantomime?

The combination of music with visible movement,—the combination of the most impalpable of arts with the most “bodily.” This fusion is effected by man through his gesture. Movement is the most precious quality of matter. Light is movement; heat is movement; sound is movement; life is movement. Life is movement; yet not all movement is life. How many people are in continual movement, always agitated yet not knowing what living means. If not all movement is life, still less all movement is art. The prime condition of art is order—a conscientious division of space and time; consequently movement will only then be art when it is classified.

Wherein is movement classified?

In space and time, length and duration. In other words a movement may be long or short, but at the same time it may be quick or slow.

The *length* of a movement can easily be established; it is perceived by the eye and therefore a visible sign is sufficient in order to obtain exactitude: from A to B:—there can be no mistake.

But how shall we obtain a regular, that is, an equal or symmetrical *duration* of movement? Only one force can secure this regularity,—music which by its essence is division of time. As a special sign perceived by the eye tells us: from such a point to this one and not *farther*. Thus the auditive sign perceived by the ear tells us: to this note and no

longer. From one note to the other we have to dispose our movement; begin on a note, end on a note—only such falling together of movement and music will secure the fusion of two arts into one, only this will secure the fusion of the music we hear with the action we see into one musical plastic art—the pantomime.

That is what we need in order that the special task should be accomplished which the pantomime imposes on the artist in contradistinction to all other arts. With his gestures he has to surrender himself to the music.

To execute with one's body the orders of music can be done in various ways as much with regard to form as with regard to expression: it is a question of talent and temperament. But no matter how the artist understands his task, one essential condition is necessary without which its fulfilment is impossible. This condition is a renunciation of one's self, the substitution of one's personal will by a blind obedience to music. Let us here establish from the beginning that the principle of the pantomime is just contrary to the one that actuates in the drama.

What is the difference?

In the drama the actor has before him an "object." He bears within himself, so to speak, his commanding force: he is the *executor* of the action, but at the same time he is the *source*. In the drama the actor says: "I do so because I want it so." In the pantomime, where a concordance of movement and sound is required, the actor himself *wants* nothing, he may want but one thing: to carry out that which music commands. He is only the *executor* of the action, its *source* is in music; *he* does not command, *he is* commanded; no object lies *before* him, but *behind* him is a moving force, the music. It is comprehensible that

the experiencing of feelings, which is such an essential factor in the dramatic performance, here can be looked upon only as a result, not as a dictating force once it is music that dictates. If an artist in preparing his mimic part will take feeling as his object, he will be inevitably drawn in the direction of these feelings, which may have an independent development different from that of music. Not the embodiment of feeling must be the object of pantomime: feeling is in the music and the latter only, its *movement* and the *character* of its movement, must be the object of the artist's striving. The mimic does not say to himself: "Now I must tease him," or "Now I must love her," or "Here I must be indignant." All this the *actor* says to himself, and if the mimist puts his object in "being indignant" or in "being in love" as he would have it in the drama, he will go his way and the music will go its way, and there will be two contemporaneous arts instead of a single simultaneous one. Before—no object; behind—the commanding instigating force of music! And rest assured that when the exact coincidence of the bodily motion with the musical is realized; that is, when the intensity, the weight and the rapidity of the bodily movements coincide with the intensity, the weight and the rapidity of the sound, then the picture of the required sentiment will come out by itself,—it will appear as an inevitable and involuntary result of rhythm: the *artist* will represent the musical movement, but *his body* or his figure will offer the picture of the "teasing," the "loving," the "indignation," which are required by the dramatic contents of the given moment. And after that, as a result of the musical expressiveness of gesture, feeling will appear.

This is what makes the difference between the dramatic and pantomimic principles. Let us see now

how we can "represent" music, or rather, *what* in music, which of its elements, we must take in order to transfer it into bodily motion.

There is a great difference between movement to music and the transposition of music into movement. The first we may observe as often as we wish, beginning with the opera and the ballet and ending with the marching soldiers. The second, that is, the transposition of music into movement, we not only have no opportunity of watching,—we scarcely have an opportunity of seeing. By the example of marching soldiers let us try to explain the difference. Every musical composition has two elements—"the time" and "the rhythmical design." When with your fingers you drum on the table and ask your companion—"What is that?" and he answers—"The March of Faust,"—he has *recognized* it because you were drumming not the *time* but the rhythmical design. If you had drummed the "time," that is—"one, two, three, four," and if at the same time, in order to help his guessing you had said to him that it is a march, he nevertheless would not have been able to say *what* march, for in the limits of the four-fourths any march can be implied. Therefore, not in the *time* lies the characteristic part of the musical composition. The characteristic part is in the rhythmical design of the melody.*

* It is obvious to everybody I suppose, that I am investigating the elements of musical composition exclusively from the point of view of musical *movement*. This is why I confine myself to the "time" and rhythm and do not mention either melody or harmony. Melody cannot be taken into consideration for the reason that the same melody (that is, the same melodic disposition of sounds) can give an unlimited variety of rhythmical designs. As to harmony, from the point of view of musical movement, it appears not only as an indifferent element (the same melody can without any influence on the rhythmical design be harmonized in a thousand ways), but as a matter of fact an almost unnecessary element (a simple beat of a drum is sufficient to realize a rhythmical design).

Time is the unchangeable canvas on which the rhythm lays down the varied curves of the rhythmical design of an arabesque. I would say that time is the trellis-work and the rhythm the creeping plant.

I offer the following musical-graphic exercise. To the sounds of the first bars of the "Faust" march, let us draw on a blackboard a chalk line at each fourth,—first sixteen perpendicular bars, then over these at equal distance sixteen horizontal ones. We will have a checker-board, a trellis. On this trellis now, let us send up the creeper of the rhythmical design. How shall we do this? To the sound of these same four bars of the "Faust" march, let us draw a chalk line which by its curves shall mark the evolving melody. To do this is very easy. As every square represents a musical "fourth," a note which lasts "one-fourth" will have to traverse a square, and as in the same time it tends to join the next note, the direction of the line,—in order to express at the same time its duration and its movement,—will have to cross the square from angle to angle, from bottom to top—diagonally. It is clear that a note which lasts two-fourths will cross two squares in the one and same direction. But as soon as a new note appears, the direction will have to change,—instead of going up to the right, the line will go up to the left and then every new note will be marked by a turn. Naturally if there are several notes in one-fourth, there will be several turns in the same square. Thus a triplet will produce a zigzag. Add to this that the character of the succession of sounds,—their greater or lesser energy, softness, distinctness, can find its expression in the angularity, roundness and interruptedness of the turns, and you will realize with

what evident exactness and fidelity the graphic part of any given design can be obtained.

Mentally keeping before our eyes such a graphic representation of the "Faust" march, we clearly see *what* the soldiers represent when they march to the music,—they represent the trellis, not the creeper, not that wherein the character of the given music lies, but that which it has in common with many other, with *quite* other musical productions. It is obvious that a man who has chosen as his aim to represent the movement of a given music, has to transpose into gesture not the trellis but the design of the creeper; every new line will be new gesture, every turn or angle a change of gesture. At the bottom of his work—in the transposition of audible invisible music into visible motion—he must have the same principle which acts in us when on the table we drum with our fingers with such exactitude that others can recognize the musical composition.*

In the application of the principle some difficulties are inevitable. Thus, when I say that to *each* audible movement, that is, to each note, a new gesture must correspond, this is only a theoretical demand. Everyone will understand that a rapid succession of many notes in quick tempo cannot be marked by a corresponding succession of gestures; that if, even were it possible, it would at any rate be as unbeautiful as inexpressive. It is as in singing: when there

* I do not in the least insist upon the necessity of recurring to musical graphic design as a compulsory pedagogical means; I think to any one, even to less musically talented people, the hearing will suffice in order to understand what exigencies sound affords to plastic art. I only propose this experiment to those unmusical ones who might take interest in the elucidation of the terms—"time" and "rhythm." Do not all sciences tend to represent in visual formulas the result of what has been acquired by other senses? Sight, after all, among our "higher" senses, acts a part of the fingers of doubting Thomas.

is a rapid succession of notes, you do not put a syllable to each note; a whole scale may be sung on one vowel. The same is true with the pantomimist in his art—when there is a scale or a trill, he cannot respond with a gesture to each note: for if he could, he would lead us out of the domain of art and into the region of the unconscious jerks of the St. Vitus dance. Here we will have to produce a fusion of many partial and minute movements into a few rare, broad ones. In the presence of this difficulty we will change the wording of our principle, and, instead of saying that to each new sound a new gesture corresponds, we will say: a new gesture is admissible *only* when there is a new sound. From this as an inevitable consequence follows the second rule: when there is no new sound, when the note is held, there is no gesture; the body stiffens and the pose lasts as long as the note.

To renounce all movement which is not justified by the music is, consequently, to what we engage ourselves when we enter into pantomime. We should begin to accustom ourselves to look at *movement*, as a *material of art* just in the same way as we look at color or sound. Imagine a painter painting a portrait and all at once with his brush accidentally dabbing the face with purple; or imagine in a concert during a symphony the tooting of an automobile trumpet. What is that? Why is it offensive? Because in the formed material of the painter arranged according to the laws of his art,—in the color a *hazardous* piece of material has thrust itself, because in the formed material of the musician arranged according to the laws of music, an *outside* sound has intruded itself. It is just the same in the mimic art. The artistic material, called pantomime, is built of *movement* and all involuntary movement

not dictated or justified by music is *hazardous*, an *outside* element to be expelled.

Let us mention here one special point of plastic art,—the movement of abduction. All movement consists of two moments. Take the simplest of gestures—indication: the hand first rises or extends itself; next it falls or withdraws.* Generally in studying a mimic part we are inclined to give pre-eminence to the first kind of movement and accord but a secondary importance or even no importance at all to the second one. And yet if the first must respond to the demands of rhythm, nothing justifies the non-observance of this demand in regard to the second. We must withdraw the extended arm, raise the bended knee, straighten the curved back, with the same observance of rhythmical order with which we extend the arm or bend the knee and curve the back. We must remember that in pantomime the expression of the word “movement” has not to be taken only in the impulsive sense but in the most general unrelative sense: any change in statics.

There are cases when the abductive gesture offers some difficulty. There is nothing easier than to bring back the palm of a hand which with astonishment has detached itself from the table; but when the gesture is of a wide radius, when the whole arm is stretched out above the head,—what is to be done then? There are two possibilities. To let it simply drop in certain cases may be very expressive; yet it would be a new independent, not abductive, gesture, not one of those gestures which by its sense does not call attention. What shall we do, then, to bring unnoticeably in its former position, a broad gesture of wide radius? When a juggler wants to

* This in plastic art corresponds to what we call in versification *arsis* and *thesis*.

conceal his trick, what does he do? He attracts the spectator's attention, directing it to another point. Before we begin to lower the uplifted arm, let us make a slight movement with the other one; let us lift it slowly and while we are occupied in this action, let us begin to lower the former: there will come a moment when both arms will be on the same level and then there will be no difficulty in distributing the last steps of gradual descent—between the two arms. This means I have not found by myself; it was pointed out to me by Jaques-Dalcroze, and he had it from the famous Delsarte.

Out of three elements the art of pantomime is composed: time (music), space (the stage), movement (man). As always in all scenic arts the chief element is man: he in his movements accomplishes the fusion of the other two. We have been investigating the condition of that fusion and of its success. The task is not an easy one. To move *when it is necessary* is difficult; yet to this difficulty is added another one,—*not to move when it is not necessary*. If we watch people or ourselves we will notice how much unnecessary movement we make in life, and we will realize how difficult the second task is. Not to move is just as difficult as to move *regularly*, perhaps more difficult. Of course more than anywhere the difficulty must not intimidate us in art. If every work bears its compensation in itself, more than anywhere it is so with regard to art; and from among all arts none can give so complete though ephemeral a satisfaction as the combination of living plasticity with music. It cannot be described, but he who has experienced knows what it means,—to renounce one's self and to surrender one's self to the power of music, to cease to will, to cease to force one's self—only he who has experienced it himself

knows what an ineffable sensation it is when the difficulty overcome develops of its own accord, when the further you advance, that which was difficult becomes easy, and the easier it becomes the more beautiful it is.

In the domain of art it is the same as in the domain of morals; in order to create anything of value it is not enough for man to draw upon himself, —he must surrender, he must subjugate himself to some higher law existing outside of himself. In living plasticity this law is music. Not inside of ourselves, not in our feelings shall we find the rule for the regularity and expressiveness of the special distribution of our movements, but in that regularity with which music disposes its sounds within the limits of the divisions of time. In obeying music, in trusting the guidance of its unbodily force shall we realize beauty with our flesh and blood. For there is no more wonderful instrument of expression than our mortal body when it obeys the spirit.

PRINCE SERGE WOLKONSKY.

RE-ENTER: THE SOLILOQUY.



HE soliloquy is no more. So we have been informed. Toward the end of the nineteenth century popular criticism as well as learned dissertation proclaimed the fact, and since then stage managers have excised soliloquies as ruthlessly as surgeons have removed appendixes. Now soliloquies, like appendixes, are again becoming reputable. Certainly soliloquies exist in the work of the best playwrights of the day—a fact apparently ignored. Is there not some reason for their being?

A convention like the soliloquy, which has flourished since the very beginning of drama in Greece, China and India, as well as in all of the modern nations of Europe, and which has often constituted the essence of a play, as in the case of Hamlet's musings,—such a device cannot be sloughed off in an instant. Critics did not agree as to the cause of its disappearance in the late nineteenth century. The soliloquy was dead. That was all. Some said it was Ibsen who killed it, although, as a matter of fact, he uses a number of soliloquies, even in his realistic pieces, conspicuously at the beginning and the end of the acts of *A Doll's House*. Some said it was Edison who effected the change with his realistic lighting of the stage. The proscenium arch is a picture frame, it was maintained, and back of it there must be a realistic picture. When a child is warned not to do a thing, his natural

impulse is to attempt it. So it is with the artist. Recently Mr. Granville Barker has broken the rule and staged some of his most effective episodes in front of the proscenium arch in St. James's Theater, London. Perhaps one reason that the twentieth century dramatist has revived and revived the soliloquy is because he has been told that he could not. At any rate, neither Ibsen nor Edison doomed the soliloquy. As early as 1660, Corneille proclaimed its abolition and boasted that there was not a single soliloquy in eight of his tragedies; but the soliloquy persisted, although it has not had the vogue in France which it had among Teutonic peoples.

The truth is, there have always been two camps of critics, those for and those against the soliloquy. Those opposed to it, decidedly a majority of late, maintain that it is not natural. No convention is, and yet it is obvious that every art has its conventions. No one has a right to object to a statue because it lacks color, nor to a painting because it lacks motion. Art is an imitation, not a reproduction, of nature. The supposedly invisible scene-shifters in the Japanese drama and the printed explanations of the dumb show of the moving pictures are conventions accepted without cavil by their audiences. Probably the effort to eliminate the soliloquy is due to the fact that the acted drama is the most realistic of all the arts. Playwrights have attempted various substitutes for the soliloquy. For example, they have resurrected from classic drama the confidant, an individual whose sole business in life is to be told secrets. But nothing can quite take the place of the soliloquy. It is the only method the dramatist has of conveying to the audience exactly what a character is thinking or feeling.

Hence the soliloquy has been revived. We are not

surprised that the Hindu drama of Tagore abounds in long passionate meditations, as that is a heritage from the old Sanskrit drama. Nor is it astonishing that Maeterlinck's symbolism, Rostand's romanticism and Von Hofmannsthal's classicism often find expression in long lyric monodies. But, in view of the prevalent idea that the soliloquy is obsolete, it is surprising to find it boldly employed by the masters of the realistic drama today.

Strindberg, who shares with Ibsen the credit, or discredit, of founding the modern realistic drama, as early as 1888 observed: "Our realists have excommunicated the monolog as improbable, but if I can lay a proper basis for it, I can also make it seem probable, and then I can use it to good advantage. It is probable, for instance, that a speaker may walk back and forth in his room practicing his speech aloud; it is probable that an actor may read through his part aloud, that a servant girl may talk to her cat, that a mother may prattle to her child, that an old spinster may chatter to her parrot, that a person may talk in his sleep." Strindberg admits the typical late nineteenth century attitude that the soliloquy is excommunicated, but nevertheless he pleads for its naturalness in certain cases.

In the twentieth century he has the courage to use the soliloquy without regard for its probability. In *After the Fire* (1907), the Stranger, whom we are wont to identify with Strindberg himself, opens the second scene with a two-page meditation which concludes with this extraordinary apostrophe to the world: "You tiny earth, you, the densest and the heaviest of all the planets—that's what makes everything on you so heavy—so heavy to breathe, so heavy to carry. The cross is your symbol, but it might just as well have been a fool's cap or a straight-jacket—

you world of delusions and deluded!—Eternal One—perchance Thy earth has gone astray in the limitless void! And what set it whirling so that Thy children were made dizzy, and lost their reason, and became incapable of seeing what really is instead of what only seems? Amen!” Like the ironic players of Timon of Athens, the Stranger’s misanthropic introspection—doubtless Strindberg’s own feelings—could have been presented dramatically only in the form of soliloquy. The Stranger continues to soliloquize throughout the little piece. Indeed, he concludes the play with this exhortation to himself, “And now, wanderer, resume thy pilgrimage!” When one reflects on the strange pilgrimage of the author’s life, these soliloquies have an autobiographical as well as a dramatic significance.

As in this case, the modern soliloquy is frequently placed at the beginning or the end of an act. No position could be more conspicuous, nor more daring. Yet, when rightly handled, the introductory and the concluding soliloquy give an artistic touch to the drama.

In *The Sorrows of Belgium*, Andrejev’s stirring picture of the stricken country, perhaps the most effective episode is the opening. The setting is the luxuriant garden of M. Maeterlinck, known as Emil Grelien in the play. The time is the beginning of the war of 1914. The village bells are already proclaiming the invasion, but the deaf old gardener Francois is clipping his roses, oblivious to the march of history. For two pages he prattles to himself and to his flowers, whimsically scolding himself, as though he had a dual personality: “To you the earth is noise and prattle, while to me it is like a madonna in colors upon a picture. Like a madonna in colors.” A contrast, this, with the horrors of

invasion which immediately follow. Dialog could not have conveyed the impression of the tranquility and the loveliness of the garden as this monolog does.

A wholly different sort of monologic opening characterizes Galsworthy's *Silver Box*, in which Jack tells his story in maudlin monosyllables. The soliloquy of the drunkard dates back to Plautus and Terence, and, it might be argued, it is no forced contrivance, but the natural result of intoxication. That excuse cannot be made for the soliloquy which follows in *The Silver Box* when Jones makes some observations over the sleeping Jack, now fallen into a drunken stupor. Talking aloud in the presence of a sleeper is not natural, but it is a favorite device of Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher and many another dramatist. Such monologs are to be expected in the plays of old, but it is rather remarkable that practically the whole of the first scene of *The Silver Box*, produced at the Empire Theater in New York a few years ago, should be in the form of soliloquy.

Modern plays which begin with soliloquizing are by no means rare. By way of further illustration, we have Tolstoy's *First Distiller* and *The Fruits of Culture*, Echegaray's *Great Galeoto* and Zangwill's *The Melting Pot*. Likewise, the second act of *The Escape* by Brieux opens with soliloquy, and so does the second act of *The Playboy of the Western World* by Synge.

Acts ending in soliloquy are even more frequent. To cite a few random examples from recent realistic drama: Act I of Giacosa's *The Stronger* (1905), Act II of Le Maitre's *The Pardon* (1895), Act I of Wedekind's *The Earth Spirit* (1907), Act II of Schnitzler's *The Legacy* (1899), Act I of Tchekoff's *Ivanoff* (1889), Act II of Andreyev's *Savva* (1906),

Act I of Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man* (1894), and Act I of Shaw's *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906), Act I and Act II of *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907), the end of Masefield's *Mrs. Harrison* (1909), of St. John Hankin's *The Burglar Who Failed* (1908) and of J. O. Francis's *Change* (1913).

The crucial moment of a play is the end, and yet two masterpieces of recent Russian drama conclude with long soliloquies,—Andreyev's *Anathema* (1909) and Tchekoff's *The Cherry Orchard* (1904). The diabolical gloating of *Anathema* over his victim is comparable with the bravura of Shakespeare's Richard the Third, but the end of *The Cherry Orchard* is distinguished by a realistic rather than a grandiose style. First, the aged man servant, is left behind, forgotten, in the abandoned house. When he realizes his plight, his lassitude seems to epitomize the hopeless condition of the whole family he has been serving. As he lies down, he mumbles, "There's no strength left in you; there's nothing, nothing. Ah, you . . . job-lot!" Though one may be repelled by the enervating atmosphere of Tchekoff, one must admit that this is an artistic conclusion of his work.

The soliloquy beginning or ending an act is often artistic, but during the progress of the action it is frequently utilitarian. The time-honored contrivance of the link, a little soliloquy inserted for the purpose of bridging the gap between an exit and an entrance, still persists, although it is often supplanted by stage business. In pieces as divergent in type as Brieux's *Blanchette*, Jones's *Michael and His Lost Angel*, Bernstein's *Thief* and Galsworthy's *The Pigeon* we find these little soliloquies. Like many of Galsworthy's characters, Wellwyn, the eccentric philanthropist of *The Pigeon* is addicted to

rumination. "Bad lot—low type,—” he flings these epithets at himself early and late in the play.

Introspection is as necessary for the thoughtful modern play as it was in Elizabethan days—more so, indeed. We are more critical, more self-conscious, emotionally and intellectually more complex than our ancestors. The modern novelist revels in self-analysis. Why should the dramatist be denied the soliloquies permitted the novelist without stint? A few modern playwrights have had the courage to use long introspective soliloquies. Tchekoff's Ivanoff is like Macbeth in his brooding self-accusation. In his very long soliloquy in the third act, beginning, "I am a worthless, miserable, useless man," he reveals the self-deceived villain, conscious of his own weakness, yet sentimentally wallowing in his slough of despond. Were it not for the self-pity of this soliloquy, there would be no key to the so-called hypocrisy of the egoist.

Likewise, soliloquies are necessary for the understanding of the adolescent psychology in Wedekind's tragedy of childhood, *The Awakening of Spring*. Morbid these soliloquies are, but veracious. If we grant that the play has a worthy purpose—that it is criminal to neglect the instruction of our youth in regard to sex—then we must admit that the very morbidity of these youthful thoughts is an indication of the necessity of wholesome instruction. Obviously it is only in soliloquy that we can get at the thoughts and feeling of these young people, but the pathetic aspect of the case is that they themselves do not understand themselves. Moritz, having failed in his examination, determines on suicide—as, unfortunately, many German boys do—but the reasons therefor are only evident when one thinks his thoughts, a soliloquy some three and a half pages

in length. The idea of suicide occurs to him suddenly, "Man is born by chance and should not after mature consideration—It is to shoot one's self dead!" The author admirably suggests the law of association of ideas in the apparent lack of sequence of thinking. While Moritz is toying with the temptation of suicide, he observes, "The landscape is as sweet as the melody of a lullaby.—'Sleep, little prince, sleep on,' as Fräulein Snandulia sang. It's a shame she holds her elbows so awkwardly!" And so on. Surely this is far removed from the stereotyped romantic soliloquy of old. Surely, too, these revelations are terrifyingly close to nature.

It is rather remarkable that Wedekind, himself an actor, and a writer for the stage rather than the closet, should employ the soliloquy again and again in his plays. His *Such Is Life*, ostensibly a romance of medieval Italy, is in reality a study of kingship, a study illuminated with several soliloquies by the King.

So in Barrie's sketch on the war, *Der Tag*, the Emperor has a two-page soliloquy beginning, "A king's life is but a day." The irony of the Emperor's overweening ambition is underscored. He foresees himself "Dictator of the world, and all for pacific ends. We come at last to the great desideratum, a universal peace. . . . God in the heavens, and I upon the earth—we two! And there are still the Zeppelins!" This passage seems to contravert the general impression that Barrie's sense of humor entirely deserted him in this piece.

Surely it did not, in Barrie's delightful burlesque of modern things theatrical, *A Slice of Life* (1910), in which a parlor maid, not daring to soliloquize, gives the initial exposition to the telephone, reads a newspaper aloud, and then, realizing that this is

perilously near to a soliloquy and therefore unpardonable, she reads the expository item to a china dog. It is true, as the burlesque indicates, that the soliloquy which is designed simply in order to inform the audience in regard to certain facts has lost its prestige, but, on the other hand, the soliloquy which depicts the innermost thought of a character seems gradually to be reasserting its function.

This is indicated by a sparkling satire in one act, *Orthodoxy* (1914), by Nina Wilcox Putnam. This little piece, containing some thirty characters, is composed almost exclusively of a series of soliloquies—a most extraordinary proceeding, with a twentieth century tang. You go to church, but not for verbal service. Instead, you learn what everybody, including the minister, is actually thinking. A woman of the congregation enters and kneels, repeating softly to herself, “I have on a new hat. I have on a new hat.” The minister’s benediction is nothing if not startling: “Let us go to dinner! Amen!” “The characters,” the author informs us, “are simply saying what they are really thinking in the situation in which they are presented, instead of employing the empty social forms which we are accustomed to having people actually give voice to”—a clever as well as a novel method of presenting satire. Are there not further possibilities in the form?

A play which reveals not what people say but—vastly more interesting—what people think, has tragic as well as comic possibilities as yet unexplored. Here might be developed a drama which the moving picture could not reproduce—a play of thought, wit, emotion, to be visualized by the mind’s eye. The moving picture audiences are alert in interpreting pantomime. Why could not the patrons

of these soliloquy plays become equally adept in contrasting the actions of characters with their thoughts? Mrs. Putnam has pointed the way. Will any one be bold enough to follow?

Putting aside this hypothetical question, the fact remains that the soliloquy is not dead. Almost exterminated at the end of the nineteenth century and still regarded by many as extinct, nevertheless it is thriving. The unusually long, frequent and perfunctory soliloquy is a thing of the past. The soliloquy is now contrived, when it does occur, with a suggestion of verisimilitude. But it has been too precious a possession of the drama, from its beginning up to the present, to be discarded in a moment. Not theory but practice proves the soliloquy's right to existence today, for it is now used not only for effects poetic and fantastic, but also for the deeper meanings psychological and introspective—for the sake of truth itself.

MORRIS LEROY ARNOLD.

THE ACTOR IN ENGLAND.*



S a profession, acting has led its followers a chase by no means always a merry one. Material success in such a calling depends largely upon the popularity of the profession; and its popularity has waxed and waned throughout the ages.

The modern actor, however, since his rise in the middle ages, has suffered, comparatively speaking, no very great reverses. In England he was set solidly upon his feet when, under the Tudors, his profession began to flourish. For a few years prior to the Restoration and for some time after, actors were reminded emphatically that they were still looked upon as rogues and vagabonds. As such they found little favor and the greater number of them had, perforce, to "feed themselves and families with hunger, sighs and tears." But thereafter they managed once more to land upon their feet, and practically ever since an increasingly good footing has been assured them.

While the evolution of acting as a means of earning bread and butter has been a long series of ups and downs, acting as an art has evolved in a circle, from simplicity to simplicity. The various phases of its change lie between the simplicity which is meagre and ingenuous and a simplicity infinitely more subtle, pregnant with suggestion and born of the

* The third of a series of articles on the history of the acting profession. The others appeared in *THE DRAMA* for August and for November, 1915.

wisdom of experience. This progress from the artless, ineffective efforts of the novice to the simple, seemingly effortless effects of the artist, is illustrated by the development of acting in England from the time of the first futile amateurs to the present day. The mutations in this evolution have been not unlike those that marked the growth of the actor's art in Greece. Acting started in the middle ages as unpretentious pantomime and naïve recitation. By degrees, as the actor realized the possibilities latent in voice and physique, his delivery grew more studied until eventually it became self-consciously declamatory. The bubble of bombast was then pricked by the first actors who saw the advantage of employing art to appear natural. By their success they soon were tempted into an excess of artifice, and the only recourse for their successors was a return to a simplicity which, though infinitely more sophisticated, approximated that of the novice.

By the time English amateurs had gained a degree of proficiency sufficient to warrant their adopting acting as a profession and their ranks had been augmented by clownish professional comedians of the type of Richard Torlton and Will Kemp, playwrights had become ambitious in striving for effects and accomplished in clothing them with flamboyant and sonorous phrases. With such stilted plays as *Gorboduc* and *Cambyses* began the period of turgid rhetoric and stately bombast. And those spectators who later went to see Kit Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* were greeted by the author's assurance that they would hear the actors "threatening the world with high astounding terms." Equally high and astounding must have been the acting. Gayton, writing in 1654, recorded that "the poets of the Fortune and Red Bull had always a mouth-measure for their

actors (who were terrible tear-throats), and made their lines proportionable to their compasses, which were sesquipedales—a foot and a half.” For the actor it was an age of elocution and swift action.

The theatre that had by this time been evolved, fostered this elaborateness of language and free and easy movement. The performers, as they strode about on their platform stage, were fairly in the midst of their responsive audience. In such a theatre there was an atmosphere not only of intimacy but of familiarity. The spectators all were eager to welcome with delight the “great feast of language” prepared for them, whether it were a dissertation on the quality of mercy or a fanciful description of the many kinds of melancholy popular among the Elizabethan gallants; and the player was equally anxious to demonstrate his ability to drop trippingly from the tongue a “mint of phrases.”

Of the actors of that day little is known. But it is evident that the sturdy Richard Burbage and the ebullient Edward Alleyn, facile of tongue and agile, were the most prominent men on the boards; and they were, no doubt, models of this exuberant style of acting. Alleyn was perhaps the more boisterous and the less subtle of the two, for he had been trained in the most turbulent parts in the plays of Kyd and Marlowe. There are indications that Burbage was of a somewhat different type. Even at so early a stage in the history of English acting signs were not wanting of a tendency to go back to nature; Burbage seems to have represented that tendency. He had gained his experience in the same company as Shakespeare, his associate; and Shakespeare, if we are willing to let Hamlet’s words bear weight with us, was dissatisfied with the prevailing

histrionic methods and ambitious to make the acting of his time less unlike the natural actions of normal persons.

These actors had the pleasant privilege of seeing the profession they followed well established; and, though they and their fellow performers were not yet considered any too respectable, they could not well have been more popular. They were much mourned when they died and well remunerated while they lived. Some of them grew rich enough to be reviled by the Puritans for their lavish display of magnificence. It was Edward Alleyne, the most affluent of them all, who, with part of his wealth, founded Dulwich College. The best of the players, those upon whom fell most of the work of producing the plays, were shareholders in the company to which they belonged, and hence received, in addition to their salaries, a portion of the profits. The inferior members of each troupe, however, were paid only a weekly wage. It was much the same managerial system that Molière later introduced in France and passed on to the *Comédie Française*.

When the theatres were closed in 1642, all actors were classed once more as undesirables. Few of the old and experienced actors were left when, in 1660, performances were again permitted. Young and untrained men had to be depended upon to take their places. And now, for the first time in England, women found their way to the stage to fill, thenceforth, most of the female rôles, as for some time they had been doing in France and Italy.

Despite the forced infusion of new blood, many of the old traditions seem somehow to have been handed down, and the declamatory style, now lacking much of the old spontaneity and grown more conventional, still endured. Thomas Betterton, who

quickly rose above his contemporaries, kept alive many of the old methods. He had been tutored by D'Avenant, who was familiar with the Shakespearean conception of what acting ought to be. With his dignified, somewhat ponderous declamation, Betterton was the greatest figure on the stage of the period, and when he died in 1710 the Elizabethan style lost its last great exponent. He was perhaps the first English actor to work out definite theories of acting; one of the first at least to put his theories in such a form that they could be handed down for the benefit of future generations. And with his talents as an actor he combined a knowledge of stage-craft which he supplemented by a study of French methods in Paris.

After the death of Betterton the actor began to go to nature for his inspiration. As Kallipides and Nicostratus had done centuries before in Greece, so Dogget and Macklin did now in England. Comedy was the first to feel the effects of this new attitude of the actor. In both comedy and tragedy, characterization had grown to lack differentiation, had become stereotyped; most comic characters were portrayed by clownish, low-comedy methods and impersonated by actors who used the same uninspired "line of business" in part after part. Thomas Dogget, a comedian, broke away from these narrow, prescribed limits. He had been looking about him at life and his fellow men, and it struck him that it would be a good thing for his fame and for the drama, too, if he were to give minutely characterized and naturalistic representations on the stage of the particular types of character called for by the rôles assigned him. By putting his idea into effect he changed the whole conception of how comic characters should be played, and enlarged the horizon of

the comic actor. This new method of character acting was taken up by Colley Cibber and other actors of the day. Cibber, as an actor, was rather limited in range, but his success was considerable, nevertheless. The modern actor owes him much. By virtue of the fact that he was a man of good family, thorough education and sound business instincts, his presence on the stage reflected credit upon his profession and served indirectly to improve the position of its members both socially and financially.

In 1741 Charles Macklin did for tragedy what Dogget and his imitators had done for comedy. His realistic characterization of Shylock in the *Merchant of Venice* was revolutionary. Instead of Shylock played in a spirit of broad farce, as tradition then demanded, he portrayed a Jew whose character and actions were those of a strong, vengeful, virile human being. His performance was a shock to the "old school's" admirers and an inspiration to the younger actors who were in a position to oppose the old and eager to adopt the new.

This trend toward truer character interpretation, David Garrick undertook to carry on. The style Dogget and Macklin had devised and courageously introduced, he perfected. His acting was so strangely lifelike, so simple and human, that Churchill was prompted to say that one could not "be pleased with nature without appreciating Garrick." And Goldsmith paid a tribute to his art when he wrote that it was only off the stage that Garrick acted. Those actors whose methods had been moulded by tradition grudgingly made way for him. Though traces of the "grand style" were still evident years after in the work of John Kemble and his sister, Mrs. Siddons, Garrick very effectually ended the sway of the monotonous, colorless, declamatory delivery.

Before his death in 1779 he had done more for acting than any other man of the theatre has ever done. In his own work he developed to a great degree the ability to make his silence eloquent by betraying a proper interest in what the other characters were saying and doing while he himself had no lines to speak. By insisting that the other members of his company be equally sedulous in their attempts to acquire the art of "listening," and by setting both them and the actors of rival companies so good an example, he no doubt had an effect upon the group acting of his time. It is a fact, at any rate, that while he was prominent upon the stage great progress was made toward the perfection of ensemble acting. Up to Garrick's day a certain class of spectators had retained the privilege of sitting, in all their arrogance, upon the stage. Garrick dislodged them and thereby did his fellows a considerable service. With his numerous innovations he cleared away much of the old stultifying convention and opened new and fertile fields for progress. Countless present day traditions, especially those that have to do with the interpretation of Shakespeare, are traceable to him. His talent, wealth, popularity and wide acquaintance among the most cultured and influential people of his day, increased respect for the actor's calling. "Garrick has made a player a higher character," said Johnson.

Not long after this salutary revision of the actor's methods, the art of playmaking began to decline. After the appearance of *She Stoops to Conquer* and the *School for Scandal*, playwrights ceased almost entirely to progress, stopped striving to create and were satisfied to be imitators. In the years that followed, they became obsessed with a desire to emulate Shakespeare, and slavishly wrote feeble dramas with

his plays as models; later they fell to aping the playwrights then popular in France and adapting their well-made dramas. As a result the plays of the time were flimsy and artificial. Histrionic material being thus very nearly negligible, the actor's methods now received undue emphasis and attention. By playing in the contemporary theatrical concoctions and performing over and over again the dramas of the past, the player developed his powers as a character actor and portrayer of emotion to a degree almost unprecedented. And since the aim of the authors who devised plays for him was to make them theatrically effective rather than true to life, he, in presenting their works, was tempted to be equally meretricious. Nature was neglected; technique approached very close to perfection. It was a time of little matter and much art.

So, while the art of drama—drama conceived as interpretive of life—marked time, the talents of the actor grew a bit over ripe and gave evidence of a tendency to go to seed, just as had been the case at a similar stage in the development of Greek acting. Toward the end of the nineteenth century new theatrical evils began to have their effect upon the art of acting: the advent of the strictly commercial manager, the exaltation of the star, the growth of the long-run system, and the disappearance of the stock company—all made the actor's proper development more difficult; and they continue still to do so.

During the interval between Sheridan and the men who laid the foundation of the modern English realistic drama, actors became virtuosi and completely outshone the dramatists. It was this epoch that produced such notable players as Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, the Keans, Macready and Irving. They were figures of great importance in the growth

of the art of presenting plays. They were great actors.

But their greatness was of a kind that the drama of to-day does not demand. When the play began again to be the thing with which to attract the public, a different style of acting was made necessary. Robertson's tea-cup-and-saucer drama and the school of realists it started, combined with the influence of Ibsen and his social drama, produced a type of play in which acting that is primarily a display of vocal and physical flexibility and emotional pyrotechnics would seem incongruous. Conditions of play-presentation were also changing. The platform stage had shrunk to the so-called apron, which in turn gave place to the picture-frame proscenium, thus isolating the actor from his audience. Improved methods of lighting made exaggerated gestures and grimaces unnecessary. At the same time scenery had evolved to a point where interiors might be shown and made to take on the appearance of actual rooms, carefully and completely furnished and suitably illuminated. Under such conditions the acting that had long been looked upon as natural was seen to have less real relation to nature than had once been supposed.

The actor had reached his goal and, not content with that, had pushed on until he overreached it. New requirements and new conceptions of what his aim ought to be, forced him to change his methods and approach a new goal by a different road. So we have the acting of the present, for the most part less technically perfect than was the acting in the period from Kemble to Irving, less striking, having less of splendor in it. But we like to think that it is deeper and truer, more natural than natural acting has ever been. At any rate, it is the acting that

modern conditions and contemporary drama and new ideals make necessary and desirable. Edmund Kean, with his terrible flashes of fury, would hardly feel at home in a drama like *The Weavers*; among the Irish Players, Henry Irving, to whom the English stage and the English actor are so greatly indebted, would find no place to fit him.

Partridge, who could see nothing worthy in Garrick's Hamlet, would be extremely bored by the acting of our time. To him our efforts to reveal people deporting themselves in drawing rooms or tenement houses as people who are used to having drawing rooms or living in tenement houses would not be "acting" at all. And he would not understand Mr. Yeats when he says, "No singer of my works must ever cease to be a man and become an instrument"; nor would the actor of what we now call the "palmy days" have wished to obey this mandate, for in doing so he would have been defeating his own ends. The acting of Kean and Irving and the men of the period they represent, was ornate. The aim of the modern actor is truth unadorned. In its evolution acting has completed the circle. It has passed through the stage of excessive artifice and arrived once more at simplicity.

ARTHUR POLLOCK.

AS TO LITTLE THEATRES



HE literary significance of the nineteenth century was the development of the novel; the literary significance of the twentieth century, gauged by events of the first decade and a half, will be the return to prominence of the drama.

This statement may indeed sound arbitrarily prophetic, but we should remember that perhaps the greatest proof of the vitality of any art is the diversity of its manifestations. It is upon its present diversity that I base my claim of a current dramatic ascendancy.

Surely any art that encompasses such dissimilar activities as the "movies" and the "little theatre" may lay claim to this title. Here, indeed, we have diversity at its greatest. Let us remember, however, that while diversity in art is a sign of healthfulness of art, each and every diversified activity cannot be constituted as positive. In every movement there is usually dross with the gold. There is dross among the gold of the present day dramatic activity. We must weigh carefully every contribution to the art of the drama in order that we may know the dross. Let us weigh the "little theatres."

Ostensibly the "little theatres" are institutions devoted to the production of drama before compensatory assemblies of the public. This should be accepted as the general definition covering every play enterprise. The presence of a public is always essential, for drama is the most democratic of arts.

Founded on the basic emotions of humanity—the fundamental natural laws governing the acts of mankind—it is primarily dependent for its effect upon that peculiar phenomenon known as the psychology of the crowd.

That is, before drama can be said to have received a fair hearing, it is not only necessary for people to assemble in a playhouse, but to coalesce into a composite unit, theatrically termed an audience, wherein individual perspectives and critical faculties are quiescent, leaving active only those primitive instincts and emotions common to all humanity. No verdict of a play read in manuscript, no verdict rendered at a private performance of invited spectators is just to play and playwright. Not until it is presented before an audience, in the true dramatic interpretation of that word, can a play be said to have received a fair trial.

What is the true dramatic interpretation of "an audience"? It is the interpretation given above—a gathering of humanity that responds to the test of the psychology of the crowd.

Obviously this eliminates the opinion formed by the individual reading of the 'script, the judgment of directors and managers at rehearsal, and even the estimate of invited guests at a private performance. It also seriously lessens the significance of a "little theatre," for here, also, we fail to find a realization of the term audience.

A true theatre audience is highly heterogeneous. It is composed of all classes of society and all grades of intellect. Consequently the appeal of the playhouse must be comprehensive. The appeal of the little theatre is limited. It is confined to a particular class in which the suppression of individuality is difficult. The spark of emotional appeal seldom kindles

simultaneously and burns with equal intensity in the breasts of individuals who, by virtue of their self-consciousness, cannot coalesce into a theatrical audience. The prime purpose of drama is consequently defeated.

Evidently the "little theatre" falls outside the definition of a playhouse because it fails to congregate a true audience. It is selective and aristocratic, while the art it should house is collective and democratic. An undramatic product is therefore furnished. Its designers have failed to consider the relation between drama and democracy as manifest throughout the evolution of the physical theatre.

Let us digress for a few moments and consider the history of the playhouse. If we trace drama to those far-off days of prehistoric Greece when a chorus of satyrs first drew the car of Thespis across the flower-strewn glade before the Temple of Dionysus we shall convince ourselves of the all-important fact that drama was the offspring of public desire, that it, of all arts, was of and for the community. The ruins of the Theatre of Dionysus in Athens, the preserved tiers of the Roman theatre at Orange, the monastic chronicles of Mediæval mysteries performed in the shadows of Gothic naves, the Italian masque in the town square, and the pre-Elizabethan drama of the inn courtyard, all stand indisputable witnesses to the democracy of the drama.

With these all-important facts clearly in mind we are in a position to realize fully the comparative barrenness of that particular diversity of modern dramatic activity known as the little theatre.

Little theatres are builded, so their founders tell us, for the furtherance of art.—So was the Theatre of Dionysus.—Their founders believe that the furtherance of art is effected by presenting it to a select

few. This few has somewhere been termed the "aristocracy of intelligence." This "aristocracy of intelligence" is necessarily exclusive; it is not heterogeneous. It fails to respond to the psychological test for an audience. It avoids anything synonymous with democracy. In brief, it is not an assembly of the public, and consequently not a true theatre audience.

This conclusively disposes of the "little theatre" as a public institution, therefore as a democratic institution and consequently as a dramatic institution. The one remaining plea in its behalf, namely, that it constitutes a test for dramatic achievement, is invalidated by the fact that its spectators are a class, not an audience, and the only true test for drama is its presentation in a theatre before an audience.

Approaching the "little theatre" from an economical viewpoint we find that the ratio of audience to art is disastrous, disastrous not in the sense that it fails to net the large per cent of profit demanded by commercial managers, but because it fails to net any per cent of profit whatever; its box-office almost invariably shows a deficit that steadily increases as the weeks of its precarious season pass on.

But, you may argue, almost any movement for introducing true art to the public must be accompanied by a monetary loss. That is more or less true; but is the little theatre a public institution? Is the little theatre physically able to introduce art to the people? These are the questions that we must ask ourselves, and answer ourselves in regard to every institution or movement posing as art or a medium of art.

As I have stated, the average capacity of a little theatre is three hundred. The spread of the move-

ment has evinced a tendency to reduce this number. The prices of admission range from one dollar to two dollars and a half. With the more general adoption of the fad by the "intellectual aristocracies" of our cities there has developed a tendency to eliminate all but two dollar and two dollar and a half seats.

So we find little theatres of from two to three hundred capacity offering chairs at two dollars and two dollars and a half to an audience from the so-termed "aristocracy of intelligence" (a class, we are told, who appreciate and are desirous of supporting true dramatic art).

Of whom is this "aristocracy of intelligence" composed? Let us do a little investigating in Philadelphia, for Philadelphia is graced with a little theatre. Last year it closed its doors after a financially disastrous season. In spite of the fact that its capacity is limited to three hundred and thirty seats the "aristocracy of intelligence" has failed to fill even these! Unoccupied orchestra chairs have been the rule, not the exception, at the Philadelphia Little Theatre. Philadelphia is a metropolis of one and one-half million people.

Obviously the "aristocracy of intelligence" is a very limited body. It is indeed limited, limited to less than three hundred at any performance, and even the Philadelphia aristocracy compromised with democracy to the extent of installing a few one dollar seats. These, we are told, were invariably occupied at every performance.

This leads us to the conclusion that there should be more dollar seats, but again it is obvious that a theatre with a total capacity of three hundred and thirty cannot be run on a dollar basis. There is only one financial solution. The little theatre must become a big theatre.

Back in 1904 when there was awakening in England a desire to free the theatre from the inelastic bonds of commercialism, William Archer and Granville Barker compiled an estimate for a National Theatre. Considerable thought was given to the capacity of the proposed theatre, and it is indeed gratifying to know that they did not allow their idealistic flight to carry them into realms of aristocratic faddism. They never lost sight of the great truism that drama is democratic, and consequently we find their plans placing a minimum capacity of thirteen hundred and fifty-five and a maximum of fifteen hundred and fifty.

Whereas the box-office capacity of the Philadelphia Little Theatre is five hundred and sixty dollars (when the two dollar division of the "aristocracy of intelligence" turns out in force), a theatre with a capacity of fifteen hundred could reduce the scale to one dollar and, with an average attendance of one thousand, double the receipts. This would also increase the investment and the running expenses, it is true, but we must remember that the chief fault of the present "little theatre" is its inability to fill its two dollar seats while the few one dollar seats are readily salable.

Again you may contend that with the increase of seating capacity from three to fifteen hundred the "little theatre" would cease to be a "little theatre." Moreover, it would no doubt lose the patronage of a large per cent of those precious few—the "aristocracy of intelligence"—who now contribute two dollars a seat because it is a "little theatre." As there are not enough of these patrons now to buy out a three hundred and thirty seat house, there really seems little at stake.

One of the noteworthy productions of the Phila-

delphia Little Theatre for the season 1914-15 was Charles Rann Kennedy's *The Servant in the House*. In spite of the fact that this same drama enjoyed prolonged success in the commercial theatres with an average capacity of one thousand, and without considering the added inducement of the author and his talented wife, Edith Wynne Matthison, who appeared in the Little Theatre cast, it failed to draw half houses in this small playhouse.

Obviously there is something besides the price per seat that works against the success of a "little theatre." It is the undemocratic spirit that invariably dominates the movement and thwarts true democratic appeal. While proclaimed as a medium for the proper presentation of drama, the most democratic of arts, the "little theatre" is permeated with the atmosphere of a drawing-room and the exclusiveness of a debutante cotillion.

We must not confuse the "little theatre" with the community theatres of Continental Europe. There is no analogy. The latter are thoroughly democratic institutions appealing to the public at large and are entirely free of that atmosphere of "an exclusive evening among the dilettante" that pervades a "little theatre."

In conclusion, permit me to state that my reference to the classic theatres is not a plea for a return to the physical magnitude of the ancient playhouses. Vastness of auditorium can no longer be considered in the light of civic necessity. The public of our cities are not obliged to look to a single theatre for their drama, as perhaps the citizens of classic Athens looked to the Theatre of Dionysus.

Moreover, our dramatists' brushes have not that broad and indefinite sweep of the ancient Greeks. Their canvas shrinks at the very thought of exposure

to the vast outdoors. The subtlety of their lines can only be appreciated in an atmosphere of nearness. Intimacy is essential to modern realistic drama. Intimacy, however, calls for no sacrifice of the democracy of drama, no revision in the definition of "audience," for it has been fully demonstrated that a theatre of large capacity can be built with an atmosphere of true intimacy. That is purely an architectural problem, an architectural problem already solved.

This discourse on the diminutive playhouse is only a plea that we realize the true meaning and purpose of drama, know it as the most democratic of arts, disparage any attempt to render it exclusive, and understand that it can never fulfill its destiny when produced in the undemocratic atmosphere of the "little theatre" movement.

BROUGHTON TALL.

THE POPULAR DRAMA OF JAPAN: PART II

The marvelous actor of Japan will live for many years and for many centuries in the beautiful color prints of Toyokuni. They seem to cast a reflective light around him, partly the work of faded color and yellowing paper; but it is always as though the artist were gazing a little wistfully down the vista of two hundred years or so, foreseeing, in a way, the death, or the degraded end of the wonderful and terrible impersonator of Old Japan. Those print actors are scarcely more distorted and acrobatic than the stage actors, but they are less complex, less disturbing to the imagination, than those who move through the maze of a Japanese play.

Drama in Japan is divided into the Old and New Schools, and these are subdivided in turn into several distinct classes, but on the actual stage of the present day there is no division, plays of widely opposite ideas and traditions of acting being thrown together in heterogeneous confusion for a single performance. The Imperial Theatre of Tokyo leads in the chaotic production of dramatic medleys, a recent bill offering such varied attractions as an agonizing death scene in which the heroine, wife of the beloved Yoshitsune, indulges in a long soliloquy over his head and then herself expires; a mad dance by a servant girl who pretends to be the ghost of the same lady six hundred years later; a realistic earthquake in which everything on the stage collapses with cataclysmic uproar; a play lifted bodily from the doll theatre, in which two artificial lovers, a hero

in gorgeous armor and a timid princess in scarlet kimono and silver headdress, make passionate love to each other, another hero wiping the gore from his sword by the light of a cage of fireflies; a dance of two *kago* bearers with a beautiful lady in the swinging chair; and, finally, an Italian ballet, with rows of Japanese girls clad in pink tights and fluffy tarlatan, balancing on their tiptoes and posturing to the music of a modern orchestra! It was rather remarkable that on this particular occasion a performance of *La Sonnambula*, or Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, of *Hamlet*, of any of Ibsen's or Strindberg's plays, was not thrown in, and the only excuse can be that the progress of the rehearsals was not such as to warrant a public production.

Unquestionably the most significant from the point of view of dramatic art and literature, and inner truth, is the *Jidai Geki*, or historical drama, of the Old School. Because of the dramatic formalities and the traditions that have grown up around these plays, they are incomprehensible to the outsider, but the very characteristics that make them grotesque in one way of thinking are the characteristics that render them dear to the heart of the Japanese. In all of them the acting is symbolic rather than realistic, conventional rather than individual. There is a proper laugh, of mingled exultation and scorn, that must be laughed by the hero after he has accomplished his long thwarted revenge for a father's murder; he must shake his hair loose and allow one sleeve of his kimono to be thrown back in just such a way as he starts out to accomplish his revenge; the mother pleading with her wayward son must agonize in the prescribed manner of tears and sniffing; and the villain must go through his long drawn out writhings as he expiates his heinous crime. The

studied art of all these conventional situations relieves them from the faintest taint of western melodrama, for, distinguished by exquisite color settings, and by the intricate and inexpressibly graceful movements which make a dance out of a fight and a picture out of every pose, and above all by the dignity of spirit in which they are presented, they stand at a high level of histrionic interpretation.

The *Jidai Geki* is closer to the original marionette plays than any of the other forms of drama. The manner of acting, and the make-up of the actors is extremely exaggerated and unnatural. The *Gidayu* music is an essential. A singer who represents all the different *dramatis personae* by the various inflections of his voice, in a poetic dialogue of a fixed number of syllables, interprets, now the action, now the emotions of the actor. As the hero leans on his silk and lacquer armrest in deep meditation, the *Gidayu* singer gives expression to the plaintive, or passionate, or warlike thoughts that are passing through his mind. *Tsuke*, or the clapping together of short rectangular sticks at either end of the stage, in imitation of the sound of footsteps, is employed when important persons come or go; with different manipulation, it is used to heighten the effect of strong or powerful poses, fighting scenes, falling bodies, or things dropped suddenly, and a tempestuous clapping at increasing speed always indicates the end of an act or play. In much the same way, drum sounds denote rain, snow, wind, waves, thunder; the entrance and exit of demons, ghosts, and supernatural beings; and battles, fires, and any unusual alarm. The *korombo*, or black boys, are seldom off the stage, serving as prompters, or the supposedly invisible means by which properties are spirited into a scene or made to vanish when they

have served their purpose. The plots of the *Jidai Geki* are, of course, largely historical, but they deal also with mythological themes and superstitions, reinterpreted according to the accepted moral sentiments of Japan. They are never constructed in our sense of the word, but string out to five, seven, twelve, or even sixteen acts, most of them having merely incidental connection with the embroidered historical facts of some noble person's life. The authors of the plays are sometimes known, as in the case of Chikamatsu and some of the more famous ones, but usually the versions are simply those worked out by certain artists who have acted in them at some previous date, and have handed them down with an unwritten copyright to their successors in a dramatic line. For instance, *Kanjincho*, one of the most popular of all the classic plays, belongs to the Ichikawa family, of which the late Danjuro the Ninth was a member, and before any theatre can present it, permission must be obtained and a sum of three thousand yen be paid over to Danjuro's daughters and adopted sons. *Kanjincho* takes rank after the *Chiushingura*, the greatest and most popular vendetta play of Japan, dealing with the story of the Forty-seven Loyal Retainers. A remarkable theatrical situation existed recently in Tokyo, when the three leading actors of Japan were playing the rôle of Benkei in this play at the three principal theatres, while a fourth actor, Danshiro of Osaka, was announced as coming in the same production a little later. If *Hamlet* were to be given for a month in three of the largest theatres of Paris or London, and a fourth performance of the same play were expected to follow almost immediately, theatre goers would be likely to complain over the lack of variety in the theatrical program! Perhaps one reason for

the great popularity of *Kanjincho*, aside from the fact that the audience witnesses the production in the capacity of critics and knows exactly whether Benkei takes five steps forward when he should have advanced six, is the prestige that has attached to this play since a performance was given before the Emperor Meiji with Danjuro the Ninth taking part. This was the first and last time for actors of the popular school to appear in the presence of a Japanese monarch.

There is a theory, more or less put into execution, that as the evening progresses, the audience and the actors should be brought into more intimate relations. Consequently it is the usual custom for an historical drama to be followed by a domestic drama, of life and manners. These *Sewa Geki* or *Sewamono* plays, although they frequently deal with historical persons, are far less circumscribed in subject matter and technique than *Jidai Geki*. The language is more modern, and the musical accompaniment is used only now and then to emphasize sad scenes. The plays are generally tragi-comedy, with plenty of frank comedy scenes introduced. All the historical dramas, with perhaps one or two rare exceptions, are pure tragedy. A typical domestic play deals with the lives of the middle and poorer classes, sometimes introducing the military heroes of the Shogunate rule. Many of the best plays of this class were written by Mokuami in the Meiji era. Perhaps one of the most interesting is a play centering around the Potter Kakiemon, who flourished some three hundred years ago, and produced a large share of the beautiful Imari porcelain so much prized by collectors to-day. The plot is the effort of the potter to produce a certain kind of red porcelain, and the domestic tragedies of his daughter's love affairs.

The freedom from the stage atrocities of enemies' heads, *hara kari*, and so forth, is refreshing after a harrowing evening of historical bloodshed. The late Kikugoro the Fifth, father of the present actor of the same name, and Matsusuke, an old actor now appearing at the Imperial, are noted for their talent in this class of drama.

An evening or day at the theatre, as the case may be, generally ends with a *Shosa Geki* or dramatic dance, accompanied by *samisen*, drums, flutes and other instruments. Many of these are adapted from the semi-religious *Noh* dances, and are consequently very gorgeous and mystic. The costumes are invariably of wonderful brocades, and the colors such as to remain fastened in the memory. These dances are sometimes of a congratulatory character, as in the first part of the year, for instance, when the dancers and costumes represent the crane and the turtle, which signify good luck in Japan. The Lion Dance and the Fox Dance, the Sword Dance, the Cherry Dance, the Maple Dance, are all recurring favorites, and there are others too numerous to mention.

The New School embraces two divisions, the *Shimpa* or modern drama and the translated play. It was originated by Kawakami, the deceased husband of the actress Sada Yakko, who was a propagator of a certain political program about twenty years ago. He gathered some young men about him and organized the *Shimpa* or *Soshi Geki*, *Soshi* meaning young political ruffian. These men were entirely ignorant of the old theatrical formalities; nor were they more familiar with the technical dramatic movements and dances. They simply jumped on the stage and started boldly playing pieces based on incidents of the contemporary Meiji era. Their

freehand acting, and the new plots dealing with events of almost current interest, such as the China-Japan War, and a whole modern paraphernalia of thieves and detectives and petty persons, aroused the curiosity and temporary interest of the public. Starting from this non-artistic type of performance, Kawakami and his followers worked over into more sentimental productions. Meanwhile he married Sada Yakko, who also made her appearance on the stage. After their visits to Europe and America, where they acquired some knowledge of modern European dramas, and also the businesslike management of the theatrical business, they introduced several famous foreign plays, such as *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Monna Vanna*, and so forth, to the Japanese boards. These, of course, were rewritten with local Japanese coloring, and the characters made to appear Japanese, although there were occasional attempts to make use of foreign costume. In *Hamlet*, for instance, the King's costume was carefully reproduced from the uniform of the present King of Denmark, in a photograph, but Hamlet appeared wearing the costume of a young *samurai* of Japan. If these discrepancies were noticed at all, little was thought of them.

It was Kawakami also who introduced radical reforms in the old theatrical habits of Japan, both before and behind the curtain. After his death, the Shimpa School lost its popularity to such a degree that the greater number of the actors engaged in the company went over into the penny shows of Asakusa Park, the White City of Tokyo, where they are appearing to-day in the *Rensa Geki*, or combined cinematograph and modern acting. The cause of the decadence of *Shimpa* is two-fold: the members ignored dramatic art, both in plots and action, and

simply talked and moved on the stage as in daily life, and their plays were nothing but family troubles which might be experienced at home without the necessity of going to the theatre. The careless way of producing the pieces, with the absence of gorgeous costuming and musical enjoyment, helped to cool down the enthusiasm which had flared up at the introduction of what was thought to be a new type of creative drama. The other half of the responsibility for the failure of *Shimpa* rests with the fact that no authors appeared on the scene to produce plays that might have had lasting recognition. At the present moment an effort is being made by men of serious aims to recover some of the influence of the *Shimpa* School. Dr. Tsubouchi, a professor in Waseda University and an eminent Shakespearean critic in Japan, is attempting to write plays dealing with problems of significance in the life of modern Japan, and he has personally trained a company of actors in the new technique required for the interpretation of this type of drama.

The translated drama, known as *Honyaku Geki*, has been in vogue for five or six years among the student and literati class, and many amateur societies and companies have been formed for the purpose of promoting the translated drama in Japan. A number of young actresses and actors have created names for themselves in these plays, Miss Matsui, of Dr. Tsubouchi's company, who has acted Nora, Cleopatra, Salome, Magda, Katusha, and twenty or thirty other rôles, taking the lead. An ex-professor of Waseda, Mr. Togi, has also come to the front in plays of Shakespeare, Ibsen, Shaw, Strindberg, and Tolstoi. There is nothing that is put on in Europe or America that does not have a trial in Japan. The Irish plays, *Hedda Gabler* and *Gabriel Borkmann*,

Tintagiles, Hannele, Electra, Faust and *Macbeth*, Bjornstjerne Bjornson's *When the New Wine Blooms*, or *Marriage*, Gorky's *Lower Depths*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, *Typhoon*, are representative of some of the ambitious attempts in legitimate drama; *The Chocolate Soldier*, *The Mikado*, in lighter vein; *La Tosca*, *Madame Butterfly*, *The Magic Flute*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Boccaccio*, in opera—for the Imperial Theatre runs an opera department under the direction of Signior Rosi, former director of one of the London opera houses. An effort is made to have the scenes, costumes, and make-up reproduce those of European production, with the result that they are farcical in the extreme. The angels in Hansel's and Hannele's dreams wore heavy white woolen nightgowns, and swung in on wires, crowned with stiff little wreaths of pink roses. The foreign gowns are of unknown vintage, being makeshifts of badly hanging and ugly clothes; shoes appear where there should be slippers, and occasionally bedroom slippers of blue or pink worsted make their way onto the stage when other so-called foreign footgear is unavailable. If the presentation is awkward, the spirit of the foreign drama is even more badly mangled. The sentiments and morals are totally different from those of Japan, and are perfectly incomprehensible to the general public. The dialogue is sometimes the literal translation of the original tongue, and sometimes a conglomeration of misunderstanding. Rarely, as under the direction of someone like Dr. Tsubouchi, it takes on the aspect of an earnest translation. The real significance of this drama lies in the fact that a need is felt for plays that make some call upon the thinking faculties. Beautiful as the old *Jidai Geki* and *Sewa Geki* always are, and morally uplifting as they sometimes

are, they seldom inspire thought, and they are too far removed from the life of the present day to have any vital significance. One thing is sure, however, no future national drama of Japan can develop from seeds of foreign importation.

Probably Tojuro is the greatest actor Japan has ever known. He lived in the brilliant Genroku period of Japanese history (1688-1704), and is credited with introducing naturalism into acting. Had methods of realism developed, Japanese acting would doubtless have followed the same lines as those of the realistic schools of Europe, but Danjuro the First, with his imitation of the puppet acting, established a convention from which the actors are still unable to break away. This long line of actors matured in the ninth and last, whose name is not unknown in western fields, although he himself never traveled out of Japan. There are many stories of Danjuro the Ninth, whose visiting card bore the modest inscription, "The Chief Actor of Japan." At the age of seventy he was still playing juveniles, comedy parts, and young girl heroines—an actor with more versatility has never lived. Not many years before he died, when the only other actors of the Meiji era who might claim rivalry with him, Kikugoro and Sadanji, were at their height of popularity, a famous story teller called upon him and asked him incidentally in the course of the conversation what the people would do when he and Kikugoro were gone.

"Oh, well," replied Danjuro, "there is Sadanji."

"Yes, but Sadanji is no longer young. What will the theatregoers do when he is gone?"

"I pity the audiences of those days!" answered the chief actor of Japan.

Among the women, Ichikawa Kume-hachi, a pupil

of Danjuro, held the foremost rank until her death two or three years ago. Danjuro once said of her, "If she had been a man, her acting would have surpassed mine!"

Although a few great artists were able to rise above the stigma attached to the theatrical profession in its early history, actors in general were considered as one of the lowest and most degraded of the social classes. The Japanese name for them was literally "riverside beggars," and in referring to them the numerals used to denote or count animals were employed. They were compelled to live and act only in a certain quarter of the city, Saruwaka Machi in the Asakusa District, and the most popular and influential actor of this quarter had to cover his face with a straw head cover whenever he went outside the prescribed limits. Of course, the immorality and laxity of character among those engaged in the theatrical profession had much to do with the position in which they were held. It was not until the Meiji Revolution in the 80's that actors, for the first time, were given the privilege of full citizenship. It is generally stated that people of the upper classes never attended the theatres, but it is scarcely likely that an escapade of such charming possibilities as a prohibited theatre party was not indulged in very frequently by the court ladies and nobles. In any case, people of any position always bought their tickets to the theatre through a theatrical tea house, a custom which is still in existence, and one which has done much to hamper the larger development of the Japanese theatre. In spite of their profession, actors of popularity receive salaries far out of proportion to salaries paid in other professions. It is not unusual for an actor to receive as much as \$15,000 or \$20,000 in gold for an engagement, but out

of this he must support his followers or pupils, who are destined to take up his name and promote his influence and style in future generations.

During the days when women were prohibited from acting in public in the same company with men, a special art of female impersonation grew up, which exists to-day in all its remarkable perversion of realism. The *onnagata*, or men who impersonate the female characters, are trained from childhood to this arduous task, and often become half women in the process. It is said that many of them wear women's garments off the stage as well as on, study various feminine accomplishments such as flower arrangement and the tea ceremony and spend their entire life in the society of women, in order that they may acquire the mannerisms and exact bearing of women. Certainly the deception is often remarkable, and except for the peculiar falsetto voice, would be unremarked. The long kimono covering the feet, the type make-up of thick white powder, small red mouth, and high arched eyebrows, and elaborate hair dress, and the naturally slender bodies and long, delicate hands of the Japanese men, help to facilitate the rôle. The most famous *oyama* in Japan at the present moment is Utayemon, an old actor at the Kebuki-za, and with him is associated Uzaemon, the most finished dancer on the Japanese stage. The Imperial Theatre boasts of three stars, Sojuro, Baiko, and Sonosuke for *onnagata* parts, Baiko specializing within this field in the rôles of ghosts, spirits, mad women and supernatural beings. There are many great actors in Japan, Koshiro at the Imperial, Kichiyemon and Kikugoro at the Ichimura-za, Enjiro, Danshiro, and Ganjiro, of Osaka. A few years ago an Actresses' School was started in connection with the Imperial Theatre, and

a number of young women of the best families flocked to join the classes under the theatre management. It cannot be said that the actresses of Japan have really presented any great artist to the stage as yet, but Miss Matsui, trained under Dr. Tsubouchi, Miss Mori, and Sada Yakko have claimed some attention. By the time the drama evolves out of its present chaotic condition, it is likely that there will be capable and well educated women whose services can be enlisted.

The question of the peculiar art of the Japanese stage, like that of the prints, will doubtless remain an unsettled one. There are those like William Archer who characterize it as insensate and barbarous, and never get beyond being amused at the *korombo*, the stage horse, and the severed wax head of the enemy, with no raw or bleeding edges. But after all, conventions exist in every country, accepted and approved by the people of that country, ludicrous and absurd enough, perhaps, to the outsiders. It is not everyone in the western hemisphere that has yet felt the influence of Gordon Craig and the school of the new stage scenery advocates, and has come to look upon the flimsy convention of a painted back drop representing the Castle of Elsinore as anything questionable. And there are those who find that the Japanese dramatic art contains a pictorial beauty and an artistic force that is most wanting on the European stage, and look forward with regret to an invasion of the eastern drama by western ideas.

One is fain to look on the most hopeful side. When two famous actors drop their lines for a brief moment, and kneeling in their gorgeous kimonos on the floor of the stage near the footlights, with a small figure between them, make their bows to the audience

and begin an introduction bespeaking the patronage of the public for the little son, or the pupil, it may be, of some friend with whom they have been in long and intimate contact, and the child actor raises his face and thanks the audience seriously and gratefully for its favor, it is a symbol that their dramatic spirit is to be carried forward into the future—with changes, perhaps, but surely as a living and growing art.

GERTRUDE EMERSON.

CARL HAUPTMANN



HMONG the contemporary writers collectively called Young Germany, Carl Hauptmann occupies a unique position. Though he belongs to the generation which in the eighties heralded and effected a revaluation of esthetic and other values, he did not share the feverish desire of those young men for self-expression, and let the storm and stress of the period pass by before he gave to the public a work from his pen. No less curious is the fact that this first work was of a philosophical character: *Die Metaphysik in der modernen Physiologie* (1893). Perhaps this deliberate philosophical self-restraint gave his subsequent poetical works their unusual character. It made him see beyond the currents of the time and saved him from running aground on the sandbanks of foregone conclusions and deceptive sophisms in which his generation had become involved.

Like his more famous brother, Gerhart, like Halbe, Hartleben and the others, he was a child of the age of Nietzsche, Ibsen, Tolstoy and Zola. He accepted their several creeds, but he never lost his sense of proportion. He saw human life ever in its entity and in its relation to the universe. He had never become such a stranger to the soil, to the fundamentals of life, the simple round of causes and effects which make up existence on our planet, as the majority of Young Germany, who lived and worked in the capital of the empire and whose outlook was

limited by metropolitan concepts and conditions. His eye embraced it all: the simple homely life of the peasants, miners, weavers and glass-blowers of his home and the complex and pretentious life of the intellectuals, the wealthy and the noble in the large industrial and commercial cities. Equally familiar with both, he maintained a certain wholesome and mature vision of the world about him, while the others were swept along by the currents and counter-currents of their time and struggled in vain to gain a sure footing.

No doubt it was his early occupation with metaphysical problems that made him react against the cold intellectualism of his time. For Carl Hauptmann creates not according to certain esthetic formulas, but in the manner of the poet-seers of old, instinctively, almost sub-consciously. He is not a faithful reflector of what he sees, a direct echo of what he hears, but rather a revealer of what he dreams and an interpreter of the longings and the dreams of his fellow-men. For life is to him a dream-world, a fabric made up of longings and desires in the fulfillment of which man seeks his happiness. To deal with such quantities, often unavowed and more often unexpressed, presupposes a certain reserve, a chaste restraint essentially different from the blunt demonstrativeness of the naturalistic school. Hauptmann knows that he is treading on delicate ground; he tiptoes along the path before him, and what he discovers and observes in his random wanderings through the byways of the human soul is sacred to him. It is something not to be spoken of aloud in the gross vernacular of the street and the market-place. Hence he seems only to whisper it to those that understand, in broken sentences, in monosyllables conveying little more than a hint, a

vague allusion. That is the impressionistic manner in which he reproduces the inner life. It must be admitted that it is singularly suited to the matter dealt with.

Apart as Carl Hauptmann stands from the majority of his contemporaries, he shares with them the sympathy with the great mass struggling for mere existence. The poor have no warmer advocate than is Carl Hauptmann, both in his stories and his plays. The sexual problem also engages his attention, though never as exclusively as it does many of his fellow writers. He is most engrossed in the character of his people and is especially skillful in dealing with such qualities as the passion of property and the peasant's attachment to the home of his forefathers. In *Ephraims Breite*, which saw the footlights in 1900, this problem divides interest with the sexual. Proud of the acres he has inherited and determined to transmit to worthy offspring, wealthy Ephraim is kind-hearted at core, but loathes to see his only daughter marry an impecunious foreign farm-hand who is scheming to step into the old man's shoes. When, after the wedding, the black-haired Bohemian resumes his relations with an old sweetheart, the bride shows her mettle. She, too, is of the hard, unyielding peasant fibre; she, too, is proud of her possessions. When the husband and father of her child spends a night with the other woman, she turns from the man whom she had blindly trusted and loved and banishes him from her threshold. The action is very meagre; all interest centers in the characters, which are drawn with amazing vitality. The play suffers somewhat from Carl Hauptmann's tendency to convey the impression of an inner dramatic conflict rather than to present it in its external manifestation. But there is an element of power in

it which was immediately recognized by sympathetic critics and which placed the author in the same rank as his brother Gerhart as a dramatist of Silesian peasant life.

The comparison thus evoked proved for many years a stumbling block in Carl Hauptmann's career. The success of Gerhart had been so instantaneous, his path so smooth and even, that it seemed almost hopeless for the older man to gain recognition in a field in which the younger seemed to reign supreme. Identified as he had been with philosophy and metaphysics, he was to many critics that had acclaimed Gerhart the greatest German poet of the time, "the other Hauptmann," who in unreasonable and unwarranted ambition was endeavoring to emulate his brother's example. Few seemed to realize that Carl, of different temperament and slower development, had only found himself after tentatively groping his way through the maze of abstract speculation towards a poetic realization of the ideas with which his brain was teeming and the images with which his fancy was alive.

Another early play, *Marianne* (1894), dealt with the problem of elective affinity and, in the author's reserved treatment of psychological conflicts, struck too foreign a note at a time when the unreserved imitators of Zola were outdoing their master and model in unabashed truthfulness. The popular triangle was presented with such delicacy that it made no impression whatever upon the greater part of the audience which attended the performance at the Berlin Freie Volksbühne in 1902. A third play of the period, *Des Königs Harfe* (1903), had in it more poetical symbolism than tangible action and is a typical specimen of Hauptmann's curious tendency to hold back his real meaning and suggest it so vaguely

that it becomes almost unintelligible. Yet the play contained the nucleus of real drama. A revolution in the capital has deposed the king. His peasant people are indignant and set out to help him. While the youthful monarch and his spouse are whiling away their time, oblivious to reality, the dowager queen dies. The insurrection reaches a climax when her funeral procession is hooted by the mob. The peasants arrive in time to free the king, who has been made a prisoner, and to reestablish him. But he pardons the leaders of the rebels, who have been condemned to death, yet does not regain his wonted cheerfulness. At last he disappears. A fisherman in a village on the coast prepares to cross the sea in quest of the lost king. But the people find him in a hermit who comes to them from his solitude. He has learned to seek his happiness in that of his people and the royal harp is once more heard by his enraptured subjects. The story hangs but loosely together and the charm of the work lies entirely in its subtle atmosphere and poetic language.

Two years later Hauptmann returned to the peasant drama with *Die Austreibung*, which calls forth comparison with *Ephraims Breite*. The setting of both is his native Silesia. The peasant's attachment to his home and his acres, and the crude sexual passion of a sensual woman are the two problems that determine the plot. From the village tavern in the valley, the widower Steyrer has brought his second wife to his lonely mountain hut. The solitude palls on the woman and, when the count, whose forests are adjacent to the property, proposes to buy it, she urges her husband to accept the offer. He refuses and argues with her, but during a kirmess signs the contract. Caught in a storm, he seeks the hospitality

of a strange roof. There he overhears a compromising conversation between his wife and her latest lover. The woman lures the man to her new home and, when he tries to escape, the husband kills him. The old theme is skillfully handled. The construction is firm and the motives clearly worked out. The characters, too, are strongly conceived and definitely outlined. But the use of verse, incongruous in a play so naturalistic in character, seriously affected the impression which the work produced on the stage. Still the critics recognized its power and the author received for it one-third of the popular Schiller prize.

With Carl's steady advance comparison with his brother Gerhart became more frequent. There is little doubt that he has the deeper insight, the finer sensibility and a most unusual feeling for the essence of things and their secret relations. The life that he creates is a stronger inner life; it is deeply rooted in the very fundamentals of existence. The men and women of his peasant dramas are really children of the Silesian mountains, weathered in the storms that sweep across their peaks. They are more genuine products of the soil than Gerhart's Silesians. Carl seems to have the greater creative power, seems more independent of current ideas and moods. He is the poet who in the frenzy of inspiration heeds little the traditional formulas and hardly considers the effect of his work. Gerhart, on the contrary, is ever conscious of his audience. But he has the constructive power and is the better builder.

In the book of plays called *Panspiele* (1910) Carl Hauptmann indulges more freely than anywhere else in his desire to convey the psychic atmosphere of the segment of life which he portrays. They are remarkable specimens of dramatic impressionism, but are hardly tempting to the actor or the stage

manager. The most playable is *Der Antiquar*, in which a young wife and a young clerk carry on a flirtation, while the old man watches them suspiciously in the intervals of attending to his business. The three characters stand out in clear and strong outline against the picturesque background of the antiquary's shop and the end has in it an element of genuine humor. The two-act carnival tragi-comedy, *Fasching*, deals with a far more complex problem, that of an artist who tries to shield his young daughter from the contamination of a Bohemianism which leads her into a compromising situation. Subtle in its psychology but very trying in the mannerisms of its style, is the little play entitled *Frau Nadja Bjelew*. The character of the heroine is an unmistakable embodiment of that unconditional devotion to an ideal cause frequent among Russians. The short play in verse which introduces the volume treats a scene from Chinese royal life and offers a mere poetic essence of the problem involved. Nothing more remote from the obvious and the commonplace can be imagined than these plays. However, even when given at what the Germans appropriately call an "intimate" theatre, they have proved too elusive to be enjoyed thoroughly save by a few.

In two ambitious attempts at historical drama has Carl Hauptmann proved his strength, but also shown his weakness. In *Moses* (1906) he undertook to trace the development of the Jewish race parallel with the life of the great prophet. The figure of the hero is invested with the commanding dignity and distinction which has made the Moses of Michelangelo one of the most powerful works of art. The types grouped about him are drawn with great strength and are admirably individualized. Some of the scenes make very effective reading, especially the one

in which Joshua and Caleb describe the promised land. But though the character of Moses alone is strong enough to carry the whole play, the action which stretches over his long life is panoramic rather than dramatic. With all its rare qualities, the play shows the author's inability to control the amazing wealth of his poetical ideas and to weld into concrete form the abstract fancies of his imagination.

This is in a measure equally true of his *Napoleon Bonaparte* (1911), a monumental dramatization of the life of the Corsican. The prelude cleverly introduces his parents, fugitives in the revolution which convulses their native island, both bringing out qualities which later appear perfected and potentially raised in the son. The rough shepherd types against the rugged mountain landscape form pictures that suggest canvases of Salvator Rosa. The atmosphere of unrest within and danger without attunes the reader to the storm and stress of the life in store for the boy, peacefully slumbering in a basket attached to the donkey which is carrying his mother to safety. The first part of the drama deals with the citizen Bonaparte and begins with his conquest of Josephine. It conveys a most vivid sense of the lightsome and frivolous spirit of the Directoire. The triumphant Mediterranean career of Bonaparte brings into relief the irresistible power of his personality, as he outwits the wily diplomats that meet him in conference and inspires with his own courage and energy the soldiers arrayed before him. In the convent scene he even proves his power over those whose kingdom is not of this world. A significant creation of the author's is the "pale young man in chains," who accompanies Bonaparte, invisible to anybody but himself, and appears at critical moments to warn him. It is this phantom-symbol of his

starved and fettered conscience that wrings from Bonaparte the promise of a truly democratic constitution for France, which he himself calls the first and last idea and the only legacy of the great Revolution.

The second part of this dramatic colossus effectively groups the events which marked the career of the emperor and conqueror until his abdication, and the postlude presents his tragic end on St. Helena. The spirit of the work approaches the classical ideal of historic drama more nearly than any other work of the kind that has come from the pens of Young Germany. Carl Hauptmann's conception of the character of Bonaparte throbs with profound human sympathy. He understands him in his overpowering strength and in the moments of weakness that prove his kinship with the humblest mortal. The numerous characters are sketched with remarkable vitality. The dramatic construction is firmer in outline than that of *Moses*. Moreover, the language shows a perceptible departure from the author's tendency to convey the impression of impulses and ideas merely dawning upon the conscience, by a cryptic language which defies comprehension and is burdened with mannerisms. Though, like his *Moses*, more panoramic than dramatic, the work gave evidence of progress in the direction in which the ultimate perfection of his unusual gifts was to be expected.

Carl Hauptmann has since sent out some works which confirmed the hopes of those who from the beginning of his poetical career had faith in his genius. The "other" Hauptmann has proved his mettle and his right to be named in one breath with his famous brother. When he returned to the Silesian village drama with *Die lange Jule* (1913), it was evident that he had made great progress in construction. It

is a most powerful tragedy built upon the passion for property. The heroine has the peasant's attachment for the soil which her forefathers had tilled and on which she has been reared, and she expects to succeed her widowed father as owner of the old homestead. He has violently opposed her marriage, and when he contemplates taking a second wife, Jule even more violently opposes his re-marriage, because it means that she will forfeit her right to the property. Both characters are of the tough, unyielding fibre which Carl Hauptmann so effectively portrays in *Ephraims Breite* and *Die Austreibung*. On the old man's deathbed Jule desperately claims her own and he curses her. From that moment her only aim is to buy the mortgage which the widow is unable to pay and to dispossess the hated intruder. Her greed and her cruelty are somewhat relieved by her sentiment for the old home with its family associations. Nor is her conscience quite deaf to the warning that comes to her through the medium of her father's ghost. But her obsession already borders on madness and as her character outgrows the limitations of human feeling it assumes uncanny proportions. That the author was able to surround his Jule with figures able to hold their own is proof of the strength that went into the creation of the whole play. The action progresses with something like inevitable logic and has moments of thrilling suspense. That the coveted property is destroyed by fire on the very night when Jule enters upon its possession, is an unexpected and powerful climax.

Close upon the successful presentation of that play at the opening of the new royal theatre in Dresden, followed the first performance in Hamburg of a poetic drama of entirely different character, *Die armseligen Besenbinder* (1913). The author had

nursed his imagination upon the folklore of his country until its spirit entered his soul and quickened the poetical concepts of his creative mind. The fanciful symbolism, the quaint mannerisms of language, the homely ethical message seem indigenous to the plain folk of the Riesengebirge. As he interprets the subconscious dreams and longings of the poor people he naturally adopts their vernacular and reflects their pitifully helpless efforts at expression of what is but dimly dawning on the threshold of their consciousness. Unrelieved in its sordid misery is the life of old father Raschke, the broombinder, save for the illusions he cherishes and the dream that haunts him. His younger son has gone out into the world, leaving in the old people's care his daughter; and neither the old man nor the girl ever falter in their belief that he will return a rich man and rescue them from wretchedness. In the meantime, owning barely more than the rags on their body and looked upon as outlaws by the property-holding country-folk, they live up to their unsavory reputation, trespassing against some of the laws which seem to have been framed to protect only the rich. The scene at the gate of heaven, where the old man arrives intoxicated with stolen wine and hears the cheering message from St. Peter that those who were poor shall there be rich, and where he is temporarily turned away with the promise of admission as soon as the absent son comes back to redeem the family's honor, is most effective. To blend the sordid reality of these pauper lives with the pathetic elusiveness of their dreams was a difficult task and in not a few passages the fusion of fact and fiction is by no means perfect. But the genuine poetic quality and the earnestness and sincerity of its spirit give that work a potent and unique charm.

Critics have long ceased to compare the work of the two Hauptmanns. They have at last found Carl Hauptmann to be a personality of independent worth and of unusual calibre. When the centenary of the Wars of Liberation kindled the latent spark of patriotism and revived memories of Arndt and Fichte, von Stein and Gneisenau, Carl Hauptmann did not immediately seize upon the timely topic. A year later, when the high tide of this centenary literature had ebbed away, he sent out his *Krieg-ein Tedeum* (1914), which was reminiscent of the history of the struggles against Napoleon, but is essentially a dramatic summary of war in general, based upon an artist's individual poetic concept. In the light of later events it can be considered a landmark, not only in the author's own development, but in that of modern German literature. For he has removed the historic foundation into the realm of imagination and while the symbols which he has created pass in impressive procession across the pages of the book, he links the past to the future, drawing the ultimate consequences of the wars that were and the war to be. There is prophetic vision in the tragi-comedy of blundering diplomacy, in the infectious response to the patriotic suggestion, in the wholesale destruction of life and property, in the gruesome aftermath of poverty and pestilence. It was the work of a poet whose vision might have been inspired by the canvases of Vereschagin. The conscience of humanity gave birth to the scene where the offspring of Enoch, the son of the minister of state, is brought by his unmarried mother to the little chapel built among the ruins by an old priest, and the cripples crowding about the child, exclaim: "Enoch, the son of Cain!" But the quickening force of hope in a better future makes the poet drop the curtain over that

scene to the distant strain of a shepherd's spring song.

It was a pathetic coincidence that the pages of the *Berliner Tageblatt* of May 21, 1914,* contained an appreciation of this play by Bertha von Suttner, who only a few weeks later passed away and was thus spared the disheartening realization that the dream of peace to which she had devoted her life was to be ruthlessly destroyed in the summer that followed. It is a no less tragic coincidence for the author that the outbreak of the war made the human message hidden in the symbolism of that play most untimely after a narrow patriotism had sounded the keynote for everything that has since been written in Germany. The play represents the climax of Carl Hauptmann's development as a writer of poetical drama. It shows him as an almost unparalleled creator of symbolical figures that impress themselves almost indelibly upon the memory of the reader.

* The play is, according to Frau von Suttner, a poet's conception of war, without pre-conceived idealization or condemnation. She calls it "a vision from which he fearlessly tears the mask, but the Medusan power of which fills him with infinite wonder, like God, Satan, nature, eternity—briefly all abysmally incomprehensible riddles of the world."

She continues:

"Great works of poetry have also something of the nature of riddles: they cannot be interpreted at once. I will therefore not attempt to discuss the conception of the phenomenon *war*, which seems to underlie the play: I myself take quite a different stand from that of the author. He does not fight war, but he is amazed by it—passionately, indignantly amazed—and what he wants to show is simply the vision which had been revealed to his inspired mind just as he saw it—and saw through it.

"The political and social effect which the work is bound to have, I will not discuss; I will speak only of the poetical and theatrical effect. From that standpoint the play has a power and a splendor which few works of dramatic literature possess. The play is not realistic, although some war-scenes of a robust and forceful realism do occur; it is rather fantastic and symbolical; it is full of faint Maeterlinckian shivers and again of deafening Walpurgian horrors. . . . The climax of the play will be the end of the third act which fairly takes one's breath away by a truly Wagnerian *crescendo* of images and sounds, of passions lashed into madness."

The great European accountant, the escaped state visionary with the traits of the Corsican, the state minister caught in the meshes of diplomatic mistakes, the visionary miner, all these figures stand out against the shifting background with admirable vitality and it is not difficult to read their meaning between the lines of the dialogue. *Krieg-ein Tedeum* is a play that would lend itself admirably to the art of a Reinhardt and, if staged by such a master, might prove a valuable medium of propaganda against war.

Since the publication of that play the great war of the nations has made war itself from the patriotic viewpoint of the individual combatants the all-absorbing theme of contemporary letters. Carl Hauptmann, too, has been carried away by the emotional wave which swept over Germany. But the one-act plays entitled *Aus dem grossen Kriege* (1915) do not show any progress in his individual growth. They are founded upon fictitious, though by no means improbable, incidents of the war. He has cleverly welded into the form of a dramatic scene the call to arms in *Der Wächter auf dem Berge*. In *Allerseelen* he effectively employs a hospital incident. A strange but impressive little play is *Genie und Gespenster*. The scene is a laboratory, the hero a scholar who boasts of having invented the formidable instruments that make war more murderous than ever. But he is unsettled by the beat of drums, the bugle calls, the roar of cannons and the moans and the cheers of the people. In the midnight hour he is visited by a succession of specters representing different social strata and is made to realize his kinship with ordinary mortals and his smallness compared with the heroism of the common soldier. That play is the only one in the volume which seems

to convey a broader human message; for in all the others the author has—sometimes rather forcedly—introduced the national songs of his country which at this time do not appeal to the foreign reader. That the curtain should fall on the scene in the Belgian cathedral to the tune of the *Wacht am Rhein* is felt almost as a breach of good taste. *Hockende Vampire*, the scene of which is the English channel, is thrilling in its dramatic intensity, but the final cry: “Wehe England!” painfully suggests the mass chorus of songs of threat and hatred indulged in by those German poets whom Carl Hauptmann seemed to outrank in depth and breadth of human sympathy. It is to be hoped that when normal vision returns to his people, he may rouse himself to a more worthy effort than this volume. But it is doubtful whether, after the great emotional crisis of the war, he will ever be able to surpass his *Krieg-ein Tedeum*.

AMELIA VON ENDE.

W A R

A Tedeum

by

Carl Hauptmann.

Authorized Translation by Amelia von Ende.

PERSONS OF THE PLAY

PRINCE KAIL, MINISTER OF STATE.

PRINCESS KAIL.

ENOCH, THEIR SON.

GRUSHKA.

MOTHER MARIA SALESIA.

ANOTHER CABINET MINISTER.

SCHALAST, SECRETARY TO PRINCE KAIL.

APTEKA, RETIRED BUSINESS MAN.

OTREMBA, RETIRED BUSINESS MAN.

THE PORTER.

KASPAR, THE VALET.

PETER HEISSLER.

MRS. HEISSLER.

THE EUROPEAN ACCOUNTANT.

THE ARMORED ARCHANGEL.

THE WORLD POWER BEASTS.

THREE PHANTOMS OF HORROR.

A DRUNKEN MAN.

A POOR WOMAN.

ANOTHER POOR WOMAN.

A POOR MAN.

THE ESCAPED STATE VISIONARY.

A FRENCH GENERAL.

ANOTHER GENERAL.

A VALET.

TWO NAPOLEONIC GRENADIERS OF THE GUARD.

A FRENCH GUIDE.

ANOTHER FRENCH GUIDE.

A RAGGED WOMAN.

A WOMAN SUTLER.

A CHILD.

A GROUP OF PANIC-STRICKEN, RAGGED WOMEN.

A GROUP OF NURSES.

FATHER FRANCIS.

A HAIRY CRIPPLE.

ANOTHER CRIPPLE.

A THIRD CRIPPLE.

A ONE-ARMED AND ONE-EYED CRIPPLE.

A SHEPHERD CRIPPLE.

A PHILOSOPHER CRIPPLE.

A BLACKSMITH CRIPPLE.

A CRIPPLE IN AN OLD FROCK COAT.

A JOLLY CRIPPLE.

MEMBERS OF THE CABINET, MEMBERS OF THE ARISTOCRACY, YOUNG COUPLES, YOUNG OFFICERS, LADIES IN BALL-DRESS, VALETS, PORTERS, PAUPERS, CHILDREN, RETIRED BUSINESS MEN, FACTORY- AND VILLAGE-GIRLS, MINERS AND OTHER LABORERS, A COLUMN OF GERMAN RESERVISTS, A COLUMN OF GERMAN INFANTRY, FRENCH OFFICERS, FRENCH SOLDIERS, WOUNDED MEN OF DIVERS NATIONALITY, SOME SISTERS OF CHARITY, A NONEGENARIAN, GERMAN TROUPS, CORPSES, CRIPPLES IN A MONSTROUS STATE OF MUTILATION AND RAGGEDNESS.

W A R

PART ONE

On one side are the palace and the park surrounded by a strong iron fence and high shrubbery. On the terrace are placed wicker chairs and tables. The balustrade is richly ornamented with flowers. On the other side lie low village huts, and between them the village street. Roads run in various directions.

There is a party in the palace. Two torches burn on the gateposts. The terrace is dimly lighted, but the windows throw out the brilliant illumination within. Around the iron fence have gathered the poor folk of the village, especially women and children. Some men are among them. When the violins in the ballroom strike a dance tune, children and girls before the gate join in the dance. In the village only one window shows a light.

PRINCESS KAIL. [*Wrapped in a red silk shawl, her hair parted Madonna-like, she comes from the palace and goes down the steps into the garden and calls softly.*] Enoch, where are you?

ENOCH. [*A young officer in the uniform of the black hussars appears on a balcony above.*] I am here, mother; why do you call me? What have I to do with your feast of joy?

PRINCESS KAIL. [*Hurrying towards a shrub.*] I must break a twig of wilted foliage and smell the mold and the odor of death. I feel once more how we are all sacrificed. I, too, wander about—find no rest in the halls of pleasure. Visions haunt me. I see

armies of white and red murderers rushing upon one another, over meadows and fields. I see death, in a thousand gaudy costumes, striking with invisible hammers, laying low everything as with a stone-crusher; and I listen to the hymns of war, thundering through the air like a host of armored angels!

ENOCH. Mother, compose yourself.

PRINCESS KAIL. [*As though waking from a trance.*] The voice of the sublime is silent. Oh, I have you once more. I was so worried—I see you again.

ENOCH. Mother, how your eyes are shining!

PRINCESS KAIL. Join the merry-makers, Enoch. Seem jolly, even if you are sad at heart. Come, before father and his guests look for you.

ENOCH. I cannot face my father today. I am soiled and tainted like a mangy cur. To you I can confess it—for you are my mother. A mother is always passionately eager to kiss away the stains of disgrace from her children.

PRINCESS KAIL. Yes—yes—yes.

ENOCH. But father's eye stings as with spines, so that shame overwhelms me. Oh, and now even more guests are coming—at midnight. [*He disappears from the balcony. On a side path appears a solemn procession of servants and uniformed dignitaries escorting a sedan. They approach in silence.*]

PRINCESS KAIL. [*Looking about timidly and speaking to herself.*] More guests coming—at midnight. Enoch! Enoch!

[*A fat porter in braided uniform has suddenly appeared at the gate and opened it. The PRINCESS hurries into the palace.*]

THE PEOPLE. [*Crowding about the gate, while the sedan is carried towards the palace.*] Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

[Servants hurry out upon the steps leading to the entrance. The sedan is carried up to them. From the doors of the palace come gentlemen in military and other official dress. From the sedan a bear in ermine mantle walks solemnly erect through the crowd of masters and servants, welcoming him with deep courtesies. Everything goes on in absolute silence. The terrace is empty once more. When the palace doors close, the Russian national anthem is heard for a moment, and a flourish of trumpets.]

In the meantime the PORTER is trying to keep the crowding villagers from the gate.]

PORTER. Quiet here! If you can't be still, even behind the fence, I must drive you away.

A POOR WOMAN. Mr. Porter, Mr. Porter!

PORTER. What is it? What do want of Mr. Porter?

THE POOR WOMAN. I think it is the sovereign lady's birthday today; they are dancing in there; it is a birthday party.

PORTER. Well, what of it? It is her birthday; her sovereignty, the Princess, saw on this day for the first time the star shining over her palace.

ANOTHER POOR WOMAN. There they bring somebody else in a sedan!

[From another side path comes another solemn procession of uniformed dignitaries and servants escorting a sedan. They approach in silence.]

THE PEOPLE. *[Crying at the gate.]* Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

[Servants hurry out upon the steps leading to the entrance. The sedan is carried up to them. From the doors of the palace come gentlemen in military and other official dress. From the sedan steps a

rooster in ermine mantle and walks solemnly erect through the crowd of masters and servants welcoming him with deep courtesies. Everything goes on in absolute silence. The terrace is empty once more. When the palace doors close, the Marseillaise is heard for a moment and a flourish of trumpets. The poor people at the gate start to join in the song.]

PORTER. Have you gone crazy? Shut up! I shall drive you down the village street into your hovels, impudent rabble.

POOR WOMAN. Mr. Porter, Mr. Porter!

PORTER. Well, what is it? What is Mr. Porter to do?

POOR WOMAN. I think it is the sovereign lady's birthday today.

PORTER. Yes, God knows! But this thing seems to take on a different aspect, for now it is midnight, and at times things happen in the world that nobody has foreseen. Things come to life—make room there. I do not understand this—another new guest—

THE POOR WOMAN. Oh, my Lord, another sedan! What is the meaning of these mysteries?

POOR MAN. [*At the iron gate.*] May be there is another bear or rooster inside.

[From a side path comes another solemn procession of uniformed dignitaries and servants escorting a sedan. They approach in silence.]

THE PEOPLE. [*At the gate crying.*] Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

[Servants hurry out upon the steps leading to the entrance. The sedan is carried up to them. From the doors of the palace come gentlemen in military and other official dress. From the sedan steps an

eagle in ermine mantle and walks solemnly erect through the crowd of masters and servants welcoming him with deep courtesies. Everything goes on in absolute silence. The terrace is empty once more. When the palace doors close, the Austrian national anthem is heard for a moment and a flourish of trumpets. The people at the fence start to join in the song.]

PORTER. I want deadly silence here!

THE PEOPLE. Mr. Porter, Mr. Porter!

PORTER. Yes, yes, yes, you'll tear him to pieces, your Mr. Porter! It may have been the birthday of the sovereign lady and the deathday of Tom or Dick, and the nameday of Peter and Paul, and the last day of so many common murderers that were beheaded, and the day of honor of so many gentlemen bedecked with ribbons—but I cannot explain this matter to you. By Jove, your eyes and your ears will have to grow a bit to understand this thing. Here comes a whole string of sedans; this is a real midnight meeting.

THE PEOPLE. [*At the gate calling.*] Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

[*A procession of sedans arrives with dignitaries and servants in uniforms. Gentlemen and valets from the palace hurry out to meet them. The sedans are borne up to the entrance. From the first steps a wolf; other animals from the others, all in ermine mantles. The people explode in new cries of "Hurrah." Deep courtesies are shown. Other national anthems are sung. From the last sedan comes a whale. The terrace is empty once more. The people lapse into silence. As the palace doors close upon the last arrival, "God save the Queen" is heard for a moment and a flourish of trumpets.*]

PRINCE KAIL. [*Appearing at the main entrance.*]
Porter, close the park gate well.

PORTER. Yes, sir.

PRINCE KAIL. An important conference is being held here; nobody is to enter uncalled, neither living nor dead. Haha, of course you could not grab the dead by the neck and throw them out, were they to come. [*He goes into the palace.*]

PORTER. Ah, there they are!

[*He stares horrified, a bunch of keys in his hand. A new sedan arrives, absolutely noiseless, specter-like. The iron gateway opens of itself. Dignitaries and valets in uniforms appear, mostly Polish; their heads are skulls. The procession enters the gate and ascends the stairway silently. No reception committee appears to welcome it. From the sedan steps an ermine-clad creature with the skull of a beast of prey; he mounts the steps without sound and disappears within the palace, the doors of which have opened of themselves. Dignitaries and servants disappear in the same spectral manner.*]

When the porter rouses himself from his stupor, crowds of young couples are seen leaving the palace, young officers escorting ladies in ball-dress, moving with a shadow-like silence.

ALL. [*Whispering among themselves.*] Serious times have come all of a sudden, serious times.

THE PEOPLE. [*Joining in the flight of the festival guests, also noiselessly, and whispering confusedly.*] Serious times have come—all of a sudden—serious times.

PRINCE KAIL. [*He appears with a gruesome laugh. At the same moment the one illumined window in*

the village opens and PETER HEISSLER's big tragic head is seen.] Ha, what uncanny face is that?

PORTER. It is the prophet of evil, Your Excellency—the miner, Peter Heissler, he who always looks up at the sky at dark and stares at the star with the tail which appeared tonight.

PRINCE KAIL. What, a star with a tail! Where? One no longer has time to look up to the sky at night!

PORTER. There it is, Your Excellency; you can see it with the naked eye.

SECOND CABINET MINISTER. [*Appearing hurriedly.*] Somebody is missing, Your Excellency; otherwise the conference might begin. The powers are all assembled.

PRINCE KAIL. Why, of course, you are right; somebody is missing. But listen! Look at the sky; a tailed star is up there—that was not written in the stars.

SECOND CABINET MINISTER. I am mighty glad that we have managed to gather the great powers so peacefully and freely about the green table. And even if for the moment they are only yawning at one another, and winking, and smiling conventionally—

PRINCE KAIL. [*As they are both going toward the door.*] Yes, by Jove, somebody is missing—the main factor. What are we going to do if he does not come? [*Both go out. Deep silence surrounds the palace. The torches on the gateposts are burning low. One goes out. The terrace is empty and dark.*]

PORTER. [*Leaning dreamily against the gate and looking up at the stars.*] It is not written in the stars.

[*Through the darkness a new sedan approaches. It seems like a lantern lit from within. Two work-*

ingmen carry it. Before the closed gate it stops, and a high voice calls from within.]

Open—open—the European Master-Accountant is coming! The great powers are waiting for him.

[The PORTER starts and opens the gate mechanically. The sedan is borne up to the stairs. The EUROPEAN MASTER-ACCOUNTANT steps from it. He is a skinny, dried-up little man with grotesquely furrowed face. He wears a yellow dress-coat with sharply pointed tails; low, black satin dancing-shoes with pointed toes, and black satin knee breeches. He carries a lantern in one hand and a globe in his arm. Cunningly smiling, he leaps out of the sedan and seems of mercurial agility.]

THE EUROPEAN MASTER-ACCOUNTANT. The great powers are already assembled! Hihihhi! I am coming—I am coming—I am greatly needed, believe me—greatly needed. Well, well, the deuce!—What may your office be, eh?

PORTER. His Excellency's Prince Kail's first porter.

THE EUROPEAN MASTER-ACCOUNTANT. Ah, well—yes, yes—now, hurry up those stairs. I have everything with me—am indispensable up there—where the white faces the black—the Gospel the Koran;—you know what that means—slave races against master races—the man on horseback against him who carries his bundle of wares on his back—the people who plow the earth against those who plow the sea. My dear porter, they would all grab one another by the throat, until their breath would escape like the wind of a bagpipe. Hihihhi! *[He disappears shrewdly smiling and with dancing steps. The PORTER closes the gate behind him and listens. A deaf-*

ening noise is heard as soon as he has entered. A young Jewess comes running up the village street. She stops to look in at the window of PETER HEISSLER, then runs on, and, arriving at the park, shakes the gate violently. When no one appears to open for her, she runs along the iron fence and calls.]

GRUSHKA. Porter, porter; open, open!

PORTER. [*Approaching leisurely.*] Out of the question, Miss. Tonight I cannot admit you—not to the young master.

ENOCH. [*Suddenly stepping out on the balcony and calling.*] Grushka, darling! [*He disappears hurriedly.*]

PORTER. [*He seems intimidated.*] Oh, the young master himself.

ENOCH. [*Appearing at the side entrance to the palace and speaking gruffly to the PORTER.*] Will you open that gate at last—and promptly disappear—no eavesdropping here—understand? You fat hypocrite, liar and slanderer—and close well your window, lest some stones might fly at your head and sand into your eyes. [*The PORTER has opened the gate and disappeared without another word.*] Grushka, darling—you have been running—in your condition. What is it—what's the matter?

GRUSHKA. Enoch, I have had a vision.

ENOCH. Grushka, your breath fails you—although your eyes laugh.

GRUSHKA. I know that you have ever so many noble girls—and that you have turned to Grushka only to while away the time—have admitted her only for a moment into your room to give her a glimpse of paradise. There are trumpet signals in the blood—or from wherever they may have come. From the lips of all people fall hard words. You are a rascal—a sinner—yes, you. [*Suddenly growing tenderly*

sad.] Oh, Enoch—once before you forged your father's name to a check—Why have you again squandered such large sums of your patrimony?

ENOCH. [*Shyly.*] How do you know that, Grushka?

GRUSHKA. Your escapades are talked about by all the people.

ENOCH. [*More shyly.*] And yet you do not scorn me, Grushka?

GRUSHKA. Oh, I have heard the trumpets of the archangels in the air. No, you will have to arm yourself against your own deeds and misdeeds.

ENOCH. [*Looking down.*] Yes, the muscles of my body may grow tense, because I am inconsiderate, capable of doing and of living boldly. Man has only the one irresistible desire to feel himself and to enjoy. We live on earth and not in a cloister. What is wealth for? But I was to be a windbag of words only—to act with my lips only and live in books and papers. I was to live a phantom life, instead of experiencing the full measure of maddening emotions.—But I will not be fettered into following a rut of trimmed desires. I will not be degraded into a tame acrobat performing balancing tricks on the waxed parquet, into a mere juggler of words, courteous, loquacious! I see no other aim than to put myself and my life on the stake and spend them.

GRUSHKA. [*Patting him.*] Shame drives beads of perspiration upon your forehead. You want to defend your misdoings. Seek no reasons for your sins. Ah, Enoch, not because you kiss my feet when they are naked, not because you are rich and of noble birth, while my father is only the poor shop-keeper of the village—he would kill me, if he knew my ways. “When the earth is full of dirt,” says my father, “the sky is as pure as the snow, and pure

as the sky is my Grushka."—My father may talk as his age understands it; I will after all lay my life and soul at your feet, Enoch.

ENOCH. Whither are you dragging me, Grushka?

GRUSHKA. To that window.

ENOCH. [*Briskly walking ahead with her.*] And what do you want there?

GRUSHKA. [*As they approach PETER HEISSLER'S window, she walks on tiptoes.*] Be quiet, I want to show you a man who is praying.

ENOCH. Hahahaha! [*With muffled voice.*] A man who prays? [*His face assumes an expression of wonder as they both look into the little room with the light.*] No, the man has a strange visitor.

GRUSHKA. [*Clutching his arm.*] Enoch, tell me, what you see; otherwise I might think it was an illusion.

ENOCH. [*Staring in at the window.*] No, it was not an illusion—Grushka; I see it as plainly as you—with ravished eyes. I see the archangel in his armor—sitting at the poor wooden table of Peter Heissler, resting his elbow on the corner—and talking earnestly with the powerful sad old man.

GRUSHKA. Can you understand the words, Enoch?

ENOCH. No, I do not understand the words.—I only see that the prophet of evil, like an astonished child, laughs all over his face—and that his gray eyes are large and shining like moist orbs.

GRUSHKA. Then you see and feel the same as I.—Do you see, too, that the archangel wears armor and has a sword at his side?

ENOCH. Yes, yes, I do, of course.

GRUSHKA. [*She drags ENOCH a little farther along the street. Then she kneels down.*] I love my mother and my father—I love my brothers and sisters—I love my dead—I would have them cut off my fingers

for my brothers and sisters—hands and arms for my father and mother; I would leap into the fire for God—but for you, Enoch [*She has risen with a leap*], for you I would sing and dance in the fire, for you I would tear the heart from my bosom—that throbbing bloody muscle; for you I would hold up my heart with my hands and let drop after drop flow amid anguish and ecstasy—oh, Enoch—because you revolt against the pale satiety of life, I love you as no other thing on earth. [*She kisses him, embraces him, lets go of him, hurries away a few steps and points to the sky.*] The tailed star goes through space. Now quite other deeds and crimes will ripen in your blood—when the high archangels sound the trumpet.

[*Wild tumult is heard in the palace. Two windows opening on the terrace are thrown open wide. From one looks out the bear, from the other the rooster, saying, "Yes, yes, a breath of fresh air—only a breath of fresh air!"*]

VOICES. [*Heard in violent dispute, calling confusedly from all directions.*] What is all this calculating for, if it brings no profit? It ought to be understood that we are not human beings, but powers—we are the great powers—hahahaha—ludicrous—these borderlines of paper and ink—wooden fences—iron fences; between great powers they are breakable fences.

[*A palace door opens. Diplomats and officers file out.*]

THE EUROPEAN MASTER-ACCOUNTANT. [*Rushing out, demonstrating something on his globe.*] Yes, my most worthy gentlemen of the cabinet—and high dignitaries—here is the earth—yes—all this earth

should of course be Russian—hehehe—but it is not yet—no, it is not yet—and of course the European master accountant must be able tolerantly to assume the other standpoint—yes, yes—there is the earth—and this whole earth should really be French—but it is not yet—no, it is not yet—it would be very agreeable, for then the French booksellers could furnish the whole earth with books—the French munition factories with arms—of course not with weapons for war—no, weapons to use among themselves—or this whole earth should be Italian—or Austrian—or German—or mainly English—for the desire of the great powers, you see, my high dignitaries—what is the desire of the great powers, if it did not desire the whole earth—that is the desire of the great powers—that is their desire.

PRINCE KAIL. [*Appearing on the terrace.*] Come back, gentlemen, the conference is to continue. It is cooler in the hall. The blood has been calmed, too.

[*All go out.*]

ENOCH. [*Having fled with GRUSHKA into the shrubbery, he stealthily returns.*] Do you understand what is happening there?

GRUSHKA. Hahaha, what was that; what animals were those that I saw looking out of the windows?

ENOCH. Come, we shall look through the openings of the portieres.

GRUSHKA. [*Peering in.*] Enoch, look—they are seated around the green table; they are not human beings.

ENOCH. No indeed, God forbid; it is the bear, the wolf, the lion, the rooster, the eagle, the whale, all merciless powers, even dead skulls of beasts of prey which attack so much more violently—they are all great powers, and that wiry little fellow, the

European Master-Accountant, talks to them like a waterfall.

GRUSHKA. He talks figures; it is all figures.

[*The doors open again. Diplomats and officials rush out once more, talking confusedly. ENOCH and GRUSHKA disappear.*]

No, no, no, that won't do; we shall never get anywhere in this way. After all we must take into account that there is no longer a Poland between Asia and Europe.

THE EUROPEAN MASTER-ACCOUNTANT. [*Demonstrating his points on the globe.*] Hehehehe, my most distinguished, my most exalted gentlemen, I admit it. Unfortunately there was made a great mistake immediately at the beginning in the division of this stony earth. That mistake is the infamous fact that stretches of land, aye, continents, have grown together. Yes, gentlemen, if this Poland still existed as a mighty dam to stem the tide of Asia—for you see—hehehe—Europe and Asia are the Siamese twins—every one of us Europeans would wish today that they could once more be operated upon. For there is no question Europe would then be a Dorado—if, for example, it could be separated from Asia by an ocean. Listen, gentlemen, an ocean between Europe and Asia! Then the bear would be on the other side of the great war, and we in Europe would be alone once more. We could dispute among ourselves about the advantages—hehehe—an ocean—but that even a European master-accountant cannot conjure out of these hopeless plains. So we must accept the mistake of the earth's division, and seek to reduce it shrewdly to human advantages. [*He loses himself in silent meditation before the globe.*]

PRINCE KAIL. [*Coming hurriedly out of the palace.*] Come in again, gentlemen; a solution must be found after all to our mutual advantage. It does not mean that all problems are to be disposed of once and for ever; is it not so? [*All drift back into the palace. Only the EUROPEAN MASTER-ACCOUNTANT stands a while lost in contemplation of the globe, and talks heedlessly since nobody is near.*] My distinguished gentlemen, there is of course on our earth a whole line of so-called great powers who all want to maintain their dignity, the greater the better; yet there is no greater power, one that affirms more conclusively, than the advantage offered by figures. I have my gold scales; I weigh and weigh; I am going to weigh for you great powers every sand grain of profit—hehehe—for otherwise why should I be called the famous European Master-Accountant?

[*Through the village street walks lonely an archangel who enters the palace gate.*]

THE EUROPEAN MASTER-ACCOUNTANT. [*Starting spellbound.*] Ah, ah! [*He convulsively fingers his hair, drops the globe from his hand and stares at the approaching archangel.*] There comes a higher power. I must immediately—Help!—hehehehe—help! There comes a higher court—hehehe—I cannot move. [*The archangel ascends the steps to the palace entrance.*]

THE EUROPEAN MASTER-ACCOUNTANT. [*Crouching low, laughing to himself.*] I cannot leave the spot—hehehe—

[*The archangel slays him with his sword; his corpse rolls down the steps. Immediately the lights are extinguished. All noise is silenced within. Death-like stillness and darkness reign. The archangel*

alone, surrounded by a halo of light, turns back and walks freely along the road until he disappears. Only the window of PETER HEISSLER still shines as a light spot after everything has been wrapped in darkness.]

PART TWO

Out of deep shadows the morning dawns. Palace and park are deserted. In the village a few lights are seen.

An archangel in armor steps out of PETER HEISSLER's door. The prophet of evil follows him.

ARCHANGEL. [*He turns back to speak.*] I am going to make use of your longing soul, Heissler. You shall be my messenger.

HEISSLER. [*Sad and thoughtful, an old sacred volume in his hand.*] What am I to announce, master?

ARCHANGEL. Your voice of sorrow shall utter the clarion note of war. Let people tremble and weep. War will mow the harvest, and death will grin from mutilated corpses in the fields and the streets and in the habitations of man. And father and mother, brother and sister, parents and children, friends and friends, and lovers and lovers will find one another only in death!

HEISSLER. I announce war, master?

ARCHANGEL. You shall call to war. War will quicken the tamed brute forces on earth, so that they will attack one another, murderer armies against

murderer armies, and nowhere shall there be a spot where even a lamb can peacefully graze,—only armed men all over, only robbers and murderers, whose hand deals the death-blow to their neighbors.

HEISSLER. With my voice of sorrow shall I call war, because you bid me to do so.

ARCHANGEL. Oh, Peter Heissler, you foolish man of prayer, you thought that God bears roses only; you have breathed the sweet breath of your native hills, have feasted your eye on His skies, have imagined the morning sun a sacrificial golden flame meant to ripen the grape, the olive and the wheat, and fill the blood of man with love! In God's name, Peter Heissler, call to war. God is more cruel than brute forces. But when millions die, millions will arise from death. Fear naught, Peter Heissler; fear not the infinite. God is vacant like the ether and vast like the infinite heavens. God is the great incendiary who makes the fire issue from the entrails of the mountains and makes them throw their giant rocks high into the azure. So their colossal fragments are hurled into the valleys of man and bury little mankind. Call to war, Peter Heissler. God is a name of mystery. God is the last secret. Only weaklings would minimize God and make Him human, would carry Him about in their pockets.—Hahahahaha, on one side the hand-mirror in which they secretly admire themselves, and on the other side their God!—in order that He may lead their beloved self towards plenty and comfort. No, no, Peter Heissler, God wants to measure eternity. God goes further,—God wants to become living seed through us.

PETER HEISSLER. [*He wants to say something, but he shudders. Then he speaks as if lost in thoughts.*] God is a hand which reaches out towards me from

the heights, and would raise me out of my beastdom, would lead me to the light.

ARCHANGEL. Whoever sees that hand is blessed! But God's body is still a cloud of swirling gray mist, the fearful resonant emptiness, a maelstrom of men who murder one another, and even thou art still a victim only and must drop as seed into the furrow with your vision in your dying eye.

A DRUNKEN MAN. [*He comes up the street, bawling.*] Tralali, tralala. At Augsburg in the Golden Star a waitress is sweet on me. Let me alone—hahaha—let me alone with your counts and princes, and cabinet ministers, and sergeants. Is it the sergeant's business if I spend my starvation wages in drink? I am of age—hahahaha—I am a free man, and if it suits me to spend the night in a ditch, instead of lying down beside a scold—at Augsburg in the Golden Star a waitress is sweet on me. [*He forces himself to steady his steps and staggers into a hut.*]

PETER HEISSLER. [*Painfully brooding, one hand mussing up his hair, the other holding on to the book; without heeding the drunken man who has disappeared.*] My voice is rough. I am an old miner, have spent days and years deep in the earth lying on my back, naked and dripping with sweat, many lonely hours in the dark, with only the light of the little oil lamp, ever silent, no word breaking the monotony of those everlasting strokes of the pick. There my voice hardened and dried up, master, and my voice is only one.

[*Screams come from the hut in which the drunken man has disappeared.*]

A MAN'S VOICE. [*Heard distinctly.*] I shall kill you, woman; I'll kill you! What? You would lay

hands on me? You push me away from the bed! You want to strike me with the poker? You ragged skeleton with the jabbering jaws! You dare to scorn me—

CHILDREN. [*Running out of the hut with cries of alarm.*] Father, you are strangling mother! Father, —father is a brute—father is strangling mother! [*Cries come from within; the children rush back.*] Oh, God,—God help—you strangle mother! You will not, will not let go of her! She is blue in the face,—blue in the face! Help! Help! Help!

PETER HEISSLER. [*With sudden anger.*] Master, will you not help? That brute is committing murder; the monster is killing his wife! [*He hurries into his house and returns with an iron rod. But the ARCHANGEL firmly grasps his arm and holds him back.*]

CHILDREN'S VOICES. [*In the hut.*] Mother! Mother! Mother is dead—mother is dead—mother is dead! and Father, the brute, is asleep, his head on the table. Help, help!

A GROUP OF FACTORY- AND VILLAGE-GIRLS. [*Singing as they pass.*]

Sunday is the day I like,
Lou and I go on a hike,
Lou-ly-lou-ly-lou-ly-Lou
With the eyes so bonny blue.

[*The ARCHANGEL has disappeared. HEISSLER stands alone, the iron rod still in his hand, rubbing his eyes as if awaking from sleep.*]

MRS. HEISSLER. [*Calling from the house.*] Husband, you restless spirit, where are you? Come in. Why don't you rest? Once you have to stop in your prayer, do lay aside the sacred book. All night you

have been again sitting up and burning your lamp, and uttering calls, prayers, and you did not heed an earthly voice! [*She appears on the threshold.*] Peter, awake from your struggle with God; look at the earth. The morning calls the colliers to go down into the mine, and you have had no sleep. The golden morning is there. My God, the golden morning! [*She looks up at the sky.*] The morning calls you, too, to go to work. [*She returns into the house.*]

PETER HEISSLER. [*He speaks absent-mindedly.*] The golden morning is at the door; yes, and there, do you not laugh that war lives in all the streets, and the murderer lies there, lolling over the table, and sleeps as gently as one who died after receiving the victor's crown? No, do not kill one locust only when the whole swarm comes; you must call to the great war! [*He goes into the house.*]

[*Four little VILLAGE BOYS with German flags come singing along.*]

No, no, they shall not have it,
Our free, our German Rhine,
Although they croak like ravens,
Like starving curs do whine!

PETER HEISSLER. [*Re-appearing. He is clad like a beggar, just as he sat all night with bare feet and unkempt hair. He has tied a wisp of straw and a red rag to a pole and he walks out of the house, solemnly past the park gate, calling again and again.*] Flames will start from the housetops like scarlet flags. Starved children will wriggle like maggots between decaying corpses. No help will come! Moaning under the lust of blood-drunken men will women draw their last breath. No help will come! All cries

will hopelessly fade away in the air; all sighs, all moans of anguish will resound in vain. That will be the great war.

[*A group of retired business men comes from the village. SECRETARY SCHALAST is talking with them. All crowd about him eagerly listening.*]

SCHALAST. Of course the rumor is afloat, in the papers, the streets, the offices. You can hear it in all the cafés in the city, on the public squares; and the government, which has to be careful of its gold for war purposes, is in a way to blame—for His Sovereignty has given orders to the post-office and all places where the government makes payments to hold back the gold and pay with bills only.

APTEKA. [*A little man with bent figure.*] Yes, yes, I suppose that is so—if it cannot be otherwise. I am just returning from early mass. I have heard the rumor whisper even through the words of the priest. Yes, yes, yes, my dear Mr. Schalast. War—I beg you to tell us, what does His Sovereignty say to this wretched talk of war? I thought that would have been done away with in our cultured age.

OTREMBKA. [*Shrewdly.*] One should be able simply and clearly to weigh the chances for and against and calculate the profits, for war would be the most senseless waste of money, not only barbarism, the most reckless waste of money.

APTEKA. [*Hastily.*] My dear Mr. Schalast, a child understands that if our national wealth is to increase, we must depend upon a quiet further development of our great cultural enterprises. I beg you: what is to become of our colossal factories when the workingmen here and all over the earth are being killed on battlefields or crippled? What is to become of our machines, our great inventions, if the hands

are not there to work them and perform their functions? And above everything else, we must be sure of our financial resources. The banks must work in peace, for if the nation's currency, the circulation of its financial system, were disturbed—

SCHALAST. Sh, sh—they are all still asleep in the palace. Will you come with me into the rear office? [*They have stopped before the gate.*] You are quite right, Mr. Apteka,—that is, His Sovereignty is surely still asleep. Only the Princess who always suffers from wakefulness may be up and may anger His Sovereignty with her war croaking, you know, painting the devil on the wall, as the saying goes—for the delicate lady likes to do that, likes to prophesy from dreams, that she has seen white and red armies rushing upon one another in battle!

PRINCE KAIL. [*He steps out of one of the doors.*]
[SCHALAST and the men walk past in servile attitude and, bowing deeply, disappear at the other side.
PRINCE KAIL, who has not returned their salute, goes to one of the tables where VALET KASPAR has quietly served breakfast. Another valet brings the morning paper. At this moment ENOCH KAIL appears in the door, in hussar uniform, very reserved, bare-headed, and waits.]

KASPAR. The young count is respectfully waiting.

PRINCE KAIL. What, the young count? Oh, yes. What can one do, if there is only one heir to one's name and he secretly commits indiscretions and wastes his substance with women from the very dregs of the people? Tell the young man—No, tell him nothing—let him stand until he for once feels his blood mount, feels that his father despises him. Let him stand. Tell him the prince did not remember that he had anything more to say to the young

count—anything that had not been made perfectly clear—tell him the prince has duties which make his time valuable—too valuable to waste it upon his son's escapades!

[ENOCH looks at the prince with an embarrassed smile, wanting to say something, but he restrains himself.]

PRINCE KAIL. [*Very calmly.*] For the forger of my name, Kaspar, I am never again at home.

[ENOCH, still with his embarrassed smile, retires without saying a word.]

PRINCE KAIL. But—not a word of this outside of this room, Kaspar, do you understand?

KASPAR. At your command, Your Sovereignty. [*He goes out.*]

ANOTHER VALET. [*Entering.*] Privy Secretary Schalast!

PRINCE KAIL. [*Replying with a gesture of assent, SCHALAST appears with the mail. The prince, seated at the breakfast table, opens a letter. With sudden animation.*] All this rebellious war clamor will unbalance even the most cool-headed man.

SCHALAST. Your Sovereignty will permit me to report that some banks in the towns of Central Germany were stormed yesterday—

PRINCE KAIL. For God's sake! War—to-day? It is easy enough to calculate the advantages simply and clearly pro and con. War would be the most senseless waste of money—not only the most terrible barbarism—the most reckless waste of money. Listen to me, Schalast, the leading men of culture to-day are conscious of their great responsibility. War to-day would be a blasphemy against the welfare of every modern industrial nation; so much the

people know themselves. And as long as I am at the head, my dear Schalast, let all those that would hear it, in my name, immediately know what I have to say, Schalast.

SCHALAST. At your command, Your Sovereignty. [*He goes out.*]

PRINCE KAIL. [*Eating his breakfast and reading letters, as VALET KASPAR returns. After a while.*] Kaspar, inquire whether the Princess is awake.

MOTHER MARIA SALESIA. [*Timidly coming upon the terrace.*] Her Sovereignty has spent the night in a wonderfully refreshing slumber, such as Her Sovereignty has known only in childhood, and is of an almost childlike gayety.

PRINCE KAIL. [*Rising angrily.*] Yes, only when these incomprehensible people begin to hear about war, pestilence, famine, they get merry. I know that song that one must love suffering, that one must scorn the riches of this earthly world, that rats and mice are always ready to attack honor, power and wealth. [*He walks up and down in wrath.*] Yes, against honor, power and wealth the pious have always repeated the reckless phrases of demagogues.

MOTHER MARIA SALESIA. I thank Your Sovereignty for the compliment.

PRINCE KAIL. [*Still walking back and forth excitedly.*] Oh, nonsense. Don't talk to me of the crowns and the crosses of the world, of your higher life. I should like to see those pampered people some time, when they no longer would know on what silken couch they would sleep and in what marble vault in the royal park their noble bones would be laid to rest. That I say even to myself in self-irony!

MOTHER MARIA SALESIA. [*Backing towards the door.*] I, too, do not understand the cruel and strange obsession of Her Sovereignty. We pious

mothers pray to a gentle Savior, one who is a God of peace, who teaches us to love our enemies. [*She leaves.*]

PRINCESS KAIL. [*Looking out of one of the windows in an upper story.*] Oh, no, one who said plainly: "I did not come to bring peace, but the sword!"

[PRINCE KAIL *stands transfixed, gazing at the window in which she appeared.*]

[*Three archangels bearing scrolls in their hands have come down the village street, entering every house, and then disappearing in the palace without heeding anyone.*]

PETER HEISSLER. [*Calling in the distance; still invisible.*] God is more cruel than animal powers, unlimited as the sky, infinite. Do not fear infinitude. God is the great incendiary. God is the last mystery. God wants to measure eternity. God wills to go further. That will be the great war.

[*Miners and other workingmen, bundles in hand, assemble on the street and form ranks.*]

PETER HEISSLER. [*Calling aloud in the midst of all.*] God is the hand that reaches out from the height for you. Blessed be whoever sees that hand! [*From the palace comes pouring a procession of women dressed as nurses, who hurry away.*]

PRINCE KAIL. [*Rousing himself from his stupor.*] Kaspar, what is going on here? Kaspar!

PETER HEISSLER. [*Unconcernedly calling out into the confusion.*] But God's body is also a cloud of swirling mist, the fearful resonant emptiness, a whirlpool of men that slaughter one another. Awake! Be men; be manly and strong. This will be the great war.

A COLUMN OF RESERVISTS. [*Some wearing soldiers' caps, all with bundles in hand, march by singing.*]

I know a radiant precious stone
In a quiet nook near by;
No jewel like it ever shone
Beneath the wide world's sky.

And God Himself that jewel laid
Into its secret chest;
It is the loyal German heart
That beats within our breast.

[*The men of the village join them, also singing.*]

PETER HEISSLER. [*Crying at the top of his voice.*]
Force against force! Murderers against murderers;
murderous nations against murderous nations! It
will be the great war.

[PRINCESS KAIL, escorted by the MOTHER, hurries out
of the palace in the garb of a nurse and starts to
follow the others.]

PETER HEISSLER. [*Disappearing.*] This will be
the great war!

PRINCESS KAIL. [*Suddenly looking back, she hurries to the PRINCE and with quaking voice.*] Oh, you,
prince and master—mankind is never to be tamed.
And now begins the great war; now the wild lusts
will once more ignore all limits; and you, too, will be
once more only an individual man, capable of deeds
and of misdeeds, capable of anything; and you, too,
will be only a minor victim. Now the time of human
sacrifice begins. Farewell, beloved, father of my
Enoch!

[*Both the PRINCESS and MOTHER MARIA SALESIA hurry
to join the others.*]

PRINCE KAIL. [*He has let everything pass by him like one stupefied.*] Kaspar, am I crazy? Am I no longer the cabinet minister? Am I no longer the Prince? The world moves of its own accord. What is happening? There is to be war? No, no, there is to be no war. My car! To the king! if the king still is king! Kaspar, is the king still the king? [*He rushes into the palace.*]

ENOCH. [*In the uniform of an officer of the hussars, riding-whip in hand, he comes through the park, as if marching with a company.*]

GRUSHKA. [*She hurries from the village and speaks, alternately weeping and laughing.*] The archangels—the war angels. [*They walk along, GRUSHKA leaning upon his arm. She pats him affectionately, always between tears and laughter.*] Think of me, Enoch. If you should give your last breath, you, Enoch—I still have you, carry you living within me. Kiss me again, Enoch.—You remain with me;—I am bearing you within me, you—and if you die, murdered on the battlefield,—I shall bring you to life again, Enoch.

ENOCH. Do you know, Grushka, that I do not notice at all that I am leaving everything that is past, Father, Mother, the ancestral palace—everything. I am stirred to such depths. I wanted to confess my past to Father. But the past faded away like an empty sound. Now I can no longer look back. —Forger—criminal—spendthrift and gambler! Whoever lays his hand upon the hilt of his sword and looks back, is not sent to the kingdom of God. Now begins the period of human sacrifices. Now I am eager to risk my life. Do not cry, Grushka. You shall be glad and you must laugh. For I am hidden within you [*with a childlike caress*] and you will bear me and guard me—a new little Enoch—one

quite awake, one purified by the hot blood of the beloved.

GRUSHKA. [*Embracing him.*] Enoch, I am your wife and I am your mother. I must remain; a pregnant woman cannot carry stones to hurl at the enemy. I must remain to guard you. Believe me, Enoch. [*He has torn away from her and gone on.*] Only a little farther shall I walk with you—until you mount your horse. Now that the great war flashes upon us, the high archangels swing the scythes and mow the crop. Oh, Enoch, who could hold back another now—who could?

[*They both disappear in the wake of the procession.*]

[*From the village comes a column of infantry singing as they march.*]

A voice resounds like thunder-peal
 'Mid dashing wave and clang of steel:
 "The Rhine, the Rhine, the German Rhine!
 Who'll guard the Rhine, the stream divine?"
 Dear fatherland, no danger thine!
 Firm stand thy sons to watch the Rhine.

[*As the song echoes and the stream of people ebbs away, there appear, one after another, THREE PHANTOMS OF HORROR, rat faces with horrible teeth, suggestively dressed, stilettos at their sides. They are bent and mean looking, their eyes half-closed with cunning, lurking and listening. They have crowns of bones in their hair, girdles and buckles of the ropes by which men are hanged, dangle animal skulls and human bones. They peer stealthily into all the windows of the village.*]

THE ONE. Empty! [*He goes on.*] An old woman in her bed.

THE OTHER. A child in its cradle. [*Going on.*] A swollen, bandaged, motherly face in a feather-bed; an old woman on the bench by the stove.

THE THIRD. A nonogenarian—without teeth—stammers, begging for a merciful end. Women and children accompany the men. Hihhihi, even the royal palace seems empty.

[*As they go towards it, the porter appears on the terrace and goes to the gate, a bundle of keys in his hand.*]

PORTER. Good Lord, the war has been declared. Trumpet blasts from one knows not where, making one's very ears ring. Women and men rush, visionary, to the great slaughter. Well, what do you want here?

THE ONE. [*Grinning.*] For the time being—nothing.

PORTER. Who are you?

THE ONE. [*Grinning.*] Servants, serving spirits, messengers of a superior will. War is our master, war is our employer.

THE OTHER. [*Grinning meanly.*] When the big butchery begins, we help to kill. Hihhihi, we spit secretly into the wounds and poison the blood, the blood of women and children, too—so the earth be once more cleansed of this human pest. Hihhihihi—

THE THIRD. [*Grinning sardonically.*] We carry dysentery, cholera, plague, fevers of all degrees of temperature, hot as hell, with delirium that makes the hair stand on end; insanity we bring, anything you want—anything that dries up the bones. Hihhihihi—

THE PORTER. [*Overcome with terror, sneaks back into the palace.*]

THE THREE PHANTOMS OF HORROR. [*Limping along on their sticks.*] Aha, Mr. Porter, now you have enough, enough of that delectable bill of fare. Hihihih, that was enough for you, Mr. Porter—our delicious bill of fare! Hihihih!

[*As they utter their gruesome laugh, darkness covers the stage.*]

THIRD PART

When the light returns, the village huts and the palace are seen in a state of war. Two Napoleonic grenadiers of the guard are doing sentinel duty before the terrace. In one of the village huts French soldiers are quartered, their bayonets forming a pyramid outside. Some soldiers are standing before the door. Others are playing cards upon the trunk of a tree lying flat before the entrance. Here and there corpses lie exposed. A woman sutler is busy over a barrel of wine. The roar of cannon is heard at intervals.

THE WOMAN SUTLER. Eh, go ahead and thunder—roar. We know—we know that human skulls are the target.

ONE OF THE DRINKING SOLDIERS. Your health, comrades!

ANOTHER SOLDIER. Battle is battle; and war is war. You cannot ask soldiers in battle to throw confetti at one another. Stupid hussy!

[*Other soldiers laugh.*]

THE WOMAN SUTLER. They had succeeded in chaining him to a lonely rock in the ocean. War—war be damned! The great war—they had chained him to a rock, as deserves such a superman.

ONE OF THE SOLDIERS. What are you talking about anyway? At whom are you spitting your venom?

THE WOMAN SUTLER. The great criminal, the great murderer; they had at last chained him to a lonely rock in the ocean, because he wantonly whirled about kings and peoples and perhaps would form a world-state out of corpses. The whole earth is burning beneath his steps.

A GAMBLING SOLDIER. Hahaha, let the old earth burn. Many a better star has burned out its life.

ANOTHER GAMBLING SOLDIER. Don't spoil the lines of your wrinkled mouth, you fair beauty of the canteen, you scolding sausage maid threefold unmaiden by Satan himself—and plucked and handled by hundreds of bloody hands. The battlefield is no nursery; there your bare life is at stake.

THE WOMAN SUTLER. [*Throws a tin cup at him.*] Wretched—hounded—blood-thirsty murderers and incendiaries, all of you!

THE SECOND GAMBLING SOLDIER. Diamond ten, diamond ace—

THE WOMAN SUTLER. [*Furiously.*] Bearded mug of a beast of prey, wildcat in boots and spurs, you cannot tell me that you rejoice in the midst of slaughter.

THE SECOND GAMBLING SOLDIER. Club ace, club king, trumps—shut up your hairy mouth, drunken hussy.

ANOTHER SOLDIER. I'll punch your capacious chest with the butt of my musket, as I did the young lieutenant of the hussars yesterday, who suffocated

at the first gulp of his own blood. [*Cannons are roaring again.*]

THE WOMAN SUTLER. [*Shaking her fist in the direction of the cannon.*] Yes, thunder! Roar—we know that the hangman's axe is over our heads; you would strangle me in beastly lust as any woman of the enemy, damned werewolf—

ONE GAMBLING SOLDIER. There, eat, earth-louse!

SECOND GAMBLING SOLDIER. What? [*He has grabbed the former speaker by the wrist.*] You cur, you sneaky wolf, are you going to cheat when the claw of death has already sunk into your neck? And this damned thing of the rattling bones is grinning at us all?

FIRST GAMBLING SOLDIER. [*He pushes the second away and grabs the cards once more.*] Gold, gold, gold, I must have—as long as I live!

THE WOMAN SUTLER. Hahahaha, gold I must have; for gold one can buy heaven and earth—and God and the devil in the bargain; it is always for gold—gold is the key to heaven on earth—yes.

SECOND GAMBLING SOLDIER. [*Again he seizes the first by the arm and then by the throat. Other soldiers intervene.*] Gold is the key to the heavenly kingdom,—mug of a cheat—

[*They fight.*]

A THIRD SOLDIER. Punch a hole into his skull! Break his head!

[*The first gambler is struck down, while the others shriek and laugh. The cannons roar.*]

A NONOGENARIAN. [*Limping out of the village hut next door.*] Quiet, be quiet, my dear men!

THE FIRST PHANTOM OF HORROR. [*As he looks grinning out of the door.*] Hihih, wait, my dear

boy, wait, you lightfoot. You would run to the pasture, little colt, eh?—Hihihi,—eager to plunge into the fulness of life, eh?—You little fool, you imagine that with your ninety years you have learned in the turmoil of war to dance and frolic to the tunes of music? [*Stretches himself out full length and opens his hand which ends in vulture claws.*] Go and lie down among the dead, sonny; there is no tumult of battle, no cruelty. [*He has seized the nonogenarian by the neck. The old man drops dead.*]

A RAGGED WOMAN. [*Near the park gate.*] There, not even a mouth is closed. When the breath is gone and the soul is fled in the last sigh, the jaws are wide open; the dead look as if they would yawn in all eternity.

[*Other ragged women come straying from the village.*]

A RAGGED WOMAN WITH A CHILD. [*Straying through the gate which is guarded by the grenadiers.*] Oh, sir—

THE ONE GRENADIER. What do you want here?

THE CHILD. [*Whimpering while the mother is searching a corpse.*] Wake the dead —

THE GRENADIER. You cannot wake the dead.

RAGGED WOMAN. [*Whining.*] Bury the dead.

THE SECOND GRENADIER. You cannot bury the dead now, crazy rabble; the battle is raging, for days the battle has been raging, and the dead are piled upon the dead.

THE PORTER. [*He appears in the palace entrance.*] Begone, get out on the fields, dig the roots if you are hungry; this is the park of the palace, and the palace must be well guarded now, for here resides the mighty one.

THE WOMAN SUTLER. [*Tapping a new barrel.*] Fresh brandy, fellow! Drink your fill; let blind rage fire your blood when you get into the midst of the slaughter; then you won't see the horrors, hunted people murdering one another.

MANY SOLDIERS [*Seizing their tin cups and carousing.*] Hurrah for war! Hurrah for the great war!

[*From the window of PETER HEISSLER'S hut one of the PHANTOMS OF HORROR looks out. Some of the people recoil at its gruesome grin.*]

THE PHANTOM OF HORROR. Hihihih, you need not be afraid, you starved, bony females; war will eat you anyway. Hihihih, come, come,—I'll only show you a great joke. Come to the window; there he sits.

THE WOMEN. [*Staring in at the window.*] Oh, there are two of them!

THE PHANTOM OF HORROR. Hihihih, sure enough, it is a couple, the decaying corpse of a woman and the great war prophet himself, he who with fear would like to crawl into a mouse-hole—if he only found one. In the meantime he has hidden behind the bed, to get out of the torrent of war. Hihihih—

THE STARING WOMEN. [*Calling.*] Peter Heissler, Peter Heissler, Peter Heissler!

[*From the room comes the sound of inarticulate shrieks like those of an idiot.*]

THE PHANTOM OF HORROR. Hihihih, the decaying corpse of a female, and a male who is crazed with fear. Listen, the prophet of evil bleats like a sheep; he is afraid of the living now. Hihihih, he would rather hold on to the decaying corpse of his wife, since murder is the world's cry. Hihihih.

PANIC-STRICKEN WOMEN. Look, the servants are throwing flowers and laurel twigs upon the stairs.

THE PORTER. Quiet here, begone, get out into the fields; this is the park of the palace.

A FRENCH GENERAL. [*Coming hurriedly from the village towards the palace.*] Where is the mighty one?

SECOND FRENCH GENERAL. [*Immediately behind him.*] More reserves into the firing-line! The center of the enemy must be broken. [*They hurry up the terrace, wishing to enter the palace.*]

A VALET. [*Appearing in the door, with concern.*] The mighty one is dreaming alone in the state-room.

THE GENERALS. [*Undecided, laughing.*] What, what, the deuce! The mighty one dreaming in the lonely state-room?

VALET. [*Mysteriously.*] He is dreaming like a seraph.

GENERALS. Dreaming like a seraph!

[*A crowd of disorganized French soldiers is coming towards the palace and the two generals hurry away with the throng.*]

THE COMMANDING OFFICER. Forward,—not into these huts—forward, I say, forward!

OFFICER OF A COLUMN OF RUSSIANS. Not into these huts; go on, go on; we must reach the wood a hundred meters further; run, march, march!

THE WOMAN SUTLER. Yes, thunder, roar, make the earth tremble. We know that the hangman's axe is suspended above our neck.

[*Wounded German soldiers, Russians, Italians, Austrians, and Scandinavians are being borne in by an ambulance squad.*]

[*A young German officer of the hussars swoons. When the sister of charity bends over him, he awakes.*]

ENOCH KAIL. Sister, come nearer, sister; quick, quick—pluck some green clover for me, some red clover—a bunch of golden clover. Quick, quick! Before death comes! Lay the clover blossoms on my distorted mouth. Death comes; yes, death comes—in this frightful slavery of murder. Death comes— [*He stammers inarticulately and dies.*]

THE WOMAN SUTLER. [*Singing.*]

I sauntered alone on a grassy wold
And heard two ravens counsel hold.
And one I heard to the other say:
Where are we going to breakfast to-day?

Said the other: In that valley's mold
Lies a knight, who is barely cold,
And no one knows where he met his fate,
Not his falcon, his dog, nor his loving mate.

When the feast begins, you sit on his neck,
While I at his bonny blue eyes will peck;
With a golden curl from out his head
We shall line in the autumn our wind-tossed bed.

[*A procession of carriers comes with huge pieces of ox-meat on poles.*]

THE WOMAN SUTLER. Light open fires; hurry up; the slaughterers must be freshly fed; they must get new strength, for the slaughter will last many a day.

ONE OF THE CARRIERS. Hurry up, hustle, light the fires!

THE WOMAN SUTLER. Yes, yes, do not consider so long. Hang the ox-meat on the iron rod over the

open fire so that the fat will soon get crisp and the hunted starved comrades will not have to chew bloody morsels.

[Other soldiers rush by in disorder.]

THE WOMAN SUTLER. Have your fill of these dead oxen, that blind rage may fire your blood and you can go on murdering. *[The soldiers eagerly surround the fires and cut chunks of ox-meat. Then they rush on.]* Yes, they have at last chained him to the lonely rock in the ocean. War, damned war—the great war! They had chained him to a rock as behooves a superman, but the great sinner broke his chains again and is among us. Every human being now carries fifty cartridges in his pocket and two hundred cartridges in his linen bag; every cartridge meant for the heart of his neighbor.

A FRENCH GENERAL. *[Entering.]* Where is the mighty one?

ANOTHER GENERAL. *[Behind him.]* Our attack upon the villages in the center has again been repulsed by the enemy.

WOMEN. *[Crowding after them.]* They are laying a laurel wreath upon a golden table.

THE VALET. *[Appearing in the palace entrance.]* Our most inexorable master will appear in a moment.

THE PORTER. *[Driving the women away.]* Away, begone, quiet here; here lives the inexorable lord of war.

WOMEN. *[Looking back with a shiver.]* The inexorable lord—Oh, lord of war!

SOME SOLDIERS. *[Calling.]* The lord of war,—attention—the lord of war!

[From the decaying palace door, during a flourish of trumpets from the archangels who awaken for a

moment on high, the Escaped State Visionary comes, a withered man wrapped in a wide gray rag. His face recalls Napoleon. He is barefoot. Iron rings are on his wrists and ankles. Short fragments of chains dangle from them. He seems absorbed in his thoughts.]

PEOPLE AND SOLDIERS. [*Rejoicing.*] Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

PETER HEISSLER. [*He suddenly runs out of his house, wretchedly ragged, almost naked, bleating like a calf, stumbling against the women who, panic-stricken, recoil from him, stops to sound a blast upon a horn, and dropping to his knees, his face turned upward, cries out his prayer.*]

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done as in heaven
So on earth.—

[*The frightened women are seized by a tremor of terror and bend low.*]

WOMEN. [*Shrieking.*] Oh!

[*PETER HEISSLER is struck by a cannon ball.*]

PEOPLE AND SOLDIERS. [*Paying no attention.*] Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

THE ESCAPED STATE VISIONARY. [*He looks cold, hard, and shy at the crowd; then wraps his ragged cloak about him as if he were cold, and speaks to himself.*] They chained me to a lonely rock in the ocean, until my wrists and ankles bled.—

SOME TIMID VOICES. Oh, he looks as if he came out of a tomb!

THE ESCAPED STATE VISIONARY. They call me the

great criminal. They call me the great murderer, because I dream like a seraph, because my will flies like the arrow of God through the light, sure of its aim, because my will never knew limitations of time or space. Who could place me within a marble vault as one who is dead? I shall live, whether in rusty human chains or bold and free. I shall live, as long as human bodies live and the earth itself breathes.

OTHER VOICES. He looks as if he came out of eternity.

OTHER VOICES. He looks as if he had broken chains and bonds.

OTHER VOICES. Who was it that fettered him?

OTHER VOICES. Perhaps the archangels have broken his chains.

THE ESCAPED STATE VISIONARY. You shudder before me, creatures of earth, and I bring you the salvation of the earth.

[The wounded try to rise. Soldiers and civilians crowd closer. The gamblers have stopped in their game.]

ALL VOICES. *[Crying anew.]* Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

[Through the cries of Hurrah sound louder and louder.]

TORTURED VOICES. Bread!—Bread!—Bread!—Oh Lord,—the corn of our fields is down-trodden—we must starve!

OTHER VOICES. *[Crying.]* We are being slaughtered, brother by brother! Oh, Lord, help, help!

THE ESCAPED STATE VISIONARY. I am force against force, I am destruction against destruction, I am the merciless heart against the merciless heart, I sweep along with the clouds. My mantle of rags flies in the

storm wind, my word is command, my word makes a hundred dead fall bleeding upon the brown soil, my very glance is command;—before it a thousand mounted men with lances sweep like a cloud over the fields and murder; my glance is command—it makes ten thousand murderous bullets whizz through the air and kill, like flocks of birds of prey.

A GROUP OF NURSES. [*Trying to crowd nearer.*] We can no longer dispose of the dying.

OTHER NURSES. We can no longer dress the wounds of the countless that are maimed.

OTHER SISTERS OF CHARITY. [*Calling.*] They are being mowed down, whole companies of them.

[THE ESCAPED STATE VISIONARY *seems to grow bolder with the growing cries of distress.*]

PRINCESS KAIL. [*As a SISTER OF CHARITY, calls.*] We need hospitals, stretchers, mattresses, soft mattresses, air cushions, blankets. The dying are innumerable and all are heroes!

ONE SISTER. [*Calls.*] Oh, Jesus and Mary, have mercy—we can no longer tell the dying about heaven!

THE ESCAPED STATE VISIONARY. [*As if to himself.*] My kingdom is of this world only [*straightening up*]. I come rushing on, like a thunderstorm, light as the breath of fire setting aflame in lurid glare villages and towns. I am the great murderer. I have the boldness of wings, that bears me through all wretchedness of earth—in spite of my rag cloak—a cherub in armor. [*He seizes the laurel on the table.*] Mine is the wreath. [*He places the wreath on his bald crown.*] Mine is the crown!

[*Even the wounded rise from their couches and with a gaze of ecstasy drag themselves closer, and a note of rejoicing becomes more and more audible.*]

Oh, master, radiant master!

THE ESCAPED STATE VISIONARY. [*With a royal gesture he commands silence, which is broken only by the peal of cannons. More freely and like one intoxicated with an idea, he speaks.*] My horizon is as wide as that of the world. A promise is seething in my breast. I hear final choirs vibrate through the air with the exultation of triumph. I hear the jubilant carol of the morning stars. There—there—far, far away! [*The people again strike a joyful war song, but the VISIONARY commands quiet.*] I see the morning light shining; human kingdoms I see—[*There is chaotic rejoicing about him.*] Sunlit, blessed human kingdoms, man peacefully welded to his fellow man, like the serenely sparkling stars! [*Tempestuous rejoicing follows.*]

CONFUSION OF VOICES. We have built for you a golden chariot, radiant superman! [*Amid shouts of joy the chariot is brought forth.*]

THE ESCAPED STATE VISIONARY. Haha, you spirits of servitude, you gray moths, you embodiments of sorrow, I am the great war! [*He leaps swiftly into the golden chariot, while the populace, soldiers, bleeding and wounded, women, children and sisters of charity proceed to draw it and crowd and struggle about the wheels. He has seized the golden scourge and lets it whizz through the air.*] Roll, golden chariot, roll through torrents of human blood! [*He lashes the people that draw it.*] Crushing millions! Haha, I want to drive into the new morning. I will give you all the kingdoms of earth and their splendors—there—far, far in the morning light—the morning light.

[*While the powerful choir of the archangels mingles with the strident whizz of the scourge, lashing*

right and left, the cheering crowd has drawn the chariot on, until it disappears. For a while the echo of the choir and the cheers is heard, while suddenly darkness descends upon the stage. Then the newly resounding choir of the archangels is suddenly joined by a dull requiem sung by human voices and swelling to a powerful crescendo. In the pale twilight, in which the chariot disappeared, a solemn procession looms, skeletons in uniforms marching to the gruesomely swelling funeral strains and filing past in an endless line towards the opposite side until darkness hides them from view.]

PART FOUR

In the darkness, brightened by starlight, the same place becomes visible as in the first three parts. All fences and landmarks are broken down. Of the palace only a fragment of a wall remains, the front entrance and the terrace with a broken statue. A bit of the iron railing still clings to the balustrade. Trees and shrubs are gone. A few bushes seek shelter by a fragment of fence. The roads and the village street are overgrown with weeds. The village itself is a heap of ruins with traces that human beings have sought shelter in dugouts. At the extreme end of the plain is seen a quiet, gentle old priest, FATHER FRANÇOIS, building a little temple. Silently absorbed in his work, he carries log after log, and fits them together until, in the course of the scene, a little chapel has risen from the ground. It is in the days of an early, bare spring.

A HAIRY CRIPPLE. [*He has a right arm only. He shyly peers out of his shelter. He looks around and, inhaling the air, takes a few steps. He is gray-haired, and is clad in a short, worn-out garment.*] It is still night. The earth seems still quite empty. Everybody still hidden in their mouseholes! There, a deer in the field! [*He pulls a rope out of his pocket, picks up a stone, and makes a sling-shot.*] Wait, I'll go for it with my sling-shot—and get the horned king. [*He throws the stone and suddenly runs out as swiftly as a race horse.*]

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. [*Also hairy and neglected, he looks shyly out of a ruin.*] Was this really one dark and frightful, everlasting night? Or was it only the deep darkness of human sleep? That I would like to know. [*He takes a few steps and attentively surveys the hole in the ground.*] No doubt this is a hole in the ground, and there is deep stillness in the air. If I did not know that it is really a wonderful stillness, I would think that it is the sweetest music, and that the air is caressing like soft hands, women's hands. [*He looks at the sky.*] Well, where am I, anyway? Surely enough, the stars are still there! Have they lost some of their radiance during the great slaughter—or have they left their orbits? No, there they are. They wink—I recognize them all. There is the one firm and unchangeable point. There is still the polar star. [*He turns about and points to the east.*] That must be the place where the sun used to rise after night was over and bring such delightful warmth and bathe everything in golden light. [*He sings.*]

And the day came again through the golden gate

On its beautiful jewelled steed.

And if I am not mistaken, perhaps, after all, we are to have a new morning. War must be over.

A THIRD CRIPPLE. [*Also in a sad state of neglect, he rises from his dugout and looks around shyly. When he sees the other one standing before his hole, he recoils timidly.*] Oh, there is another human being, just awakened. Hahahaha, also a miserable cripple as I am, with only a stump of an arm with mutilated fingers and with his incisors shot away. He presses his side as if a bullet were in his hip-bone. Only his head has not been crushed. Ha, if my head had been crushed in the infernal butchery, I would now be lying under this sod. [*In the dawning morning other cripples, shyly, one by one, begin to wander about, sticks in their hands, and slouch gingerly over the field.*] And then these greedy cripples might dig me out with their canes and might find a decomposed corpse directly under the surface. [*The other cripple staring at him, he says shyly, yet sharply.*] No, I dare not go out. I do not trust this thing. [*He disappears in his dugout.*]

ONE OF THE CRIPPLES. [*They grope about with their sticks and seem to examine the earth. Then one speaks to himself.*] Right under the surface there are sometimes the most wonderful treasures, not only fragments of bombs, but women's jewelry, fine glasses. Ah, look here! A silver cup! [*He looks about shyly and hides it in his coat.*] Are we still at war, I wonder? I am trying hard to find out. Yes, the hellish noise has ceased, the terrible cry of murder which came sweeping on like a black thunder-cloud and struck me senseless and left me a wretched cripple. One will never understand what war is. [*He looks shyly at ANOTHER CRIPPLE. Walking towards him, he continues to speak to himself.*] I am going to ask my neighbor whether war is over.

THE OTHER CRIPPLE. [*On seeing the approach, he seems suddenly frightened and angry.*] Don't you

come near me. I am not fond of human creatures. You never can tell but they may be planning some treachery.

THE PRECEDING CRIPPLE. I, too, have only one eye and one arm.

THE OTHER CRIPPLE. [*Still frightened.*] By the morning star which still brightly pursues its course, I was a very peaceable man. I was quietly tending my sheep among the clover stubbles and on the meadow. I was a peaceful shepherd of great experience. And of a sudden I have a bayonet in my back and don't know who it is that throws me down into the grass. A few men in uniforms had stealthily come out of the ravine and said that I was their enemy. There I lay until the long night came upon me. Now I have awakened from the endless darkness after all.—But I do not trust—

THE PRECEDING CRIPPLE. Who are you, any way?

THE OTHER CRIPPLE. Who should I be but he who stands before you. Yes, man and beast have to rely upon themselves only; nobody can trust another.

THE PRECEDING CRIPPLE. But you must have had a name.

THE OTHER CRIPPLE. [*While the number of cripples searching the field with their sticks is increasing.*] Surely I did have a name. Yes, yes! But I have it no longer. Don't come so near me; you might try to persuade me that you are an emperor or a general or only a general director—and you would be capable to dismiss me entirely from this earthly servitude. But all that you can do no longer—for since that great mass murder— [*The eastern sky brightens slowly.*]

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. There is the spot where the sun may perhaps be born again. [*A few cripples*

that follow one another on their heels and have come near the two speakers, are busy digging.]

THE CRIPPLE who was once a philosopher. There is the shining uniform of a white knight.

ANOTHER CRIPPLE who was once a blacksmith. He still stretches out his hand from the grave, and there are two rings on it.

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. Those I shall take; ah, that is a splendid ruby! How it glows! Perhaps the morning will break again, since dawn is brightening. Oh, what play of rose-color! Surely a gift from his wife;—he was colonel of the cuirassiers, and a diamond he has, too, of a size, well, well,—what brilliant light! That was surely a gift from his dear little daughter.

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. [*Watching him stealthily and significantly, and examining him from head to foot, as he inspects the rings in his hand.*] Hahaha, a cripple who grows sentimental after his limbs have been torn from his trunk and his one eye is totally gone. Hahaha, how do you know all these tales you are telling?

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. How I know them! Hahaha, how I know my tales! [*His senseless laughter changes to weeping.*] My tears flow. I put these rings calmly on my fingers for after all I have some things to remember, some wonderful things, some really wonderful things—and they have all been murdered by war!

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. [*He comes closer and looks at him more and more curiously.*] What have you been?

THE PHILOSOPHER-CRIPPLE. I was a man, who had wife and child and lived in a peaceful house something like this—no—here—that must have been a

very noble palace. These are ruins of a very noble palace and war has not left much of it. This entrance—haha—surely a prince of the great powers must have resided there with a proud commanding voice. But war has razed everything, the palace and also my house, which so peacefully lay among the hills outside of the city.

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. What were you doing at that time?

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. What is a man to do when he lives peacefully among the quiet hills?

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. You are all the time talking around the point. I do not want to question you about your name. I don't even want to know who you once were, but I do not see that you have never wielded the sledgehammer as I did. If a man has once done that, even the stump of his arm shows that he had powerful muscles. You are a very delicate sort, a tenderfoot, eh? War must have badly frightened you.

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. Me and you and all of us; even the beetles crawling in the grass, even the worms boring in the wood were terrified by war. The beams of the houses creaked and cracked, the walls burst, the shingles on the smallest hut rattled, even the birds in the trees were frightened, everything was stricken with terror. The human beings whose duty it was not to kill the others, knelt and prayed incessantly: "Holy Lord!—God Almighty!" The leaves on the trees trembled with fear, the clouds swept along like race horses, the trees in the woods shook as if they would be uprooted. And only one did not tremble, the emperor of war did not tremble, and there was another who did not tremble—the soul within me did not tremble; the clamor of war did not reach my soul

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. [*While a group of other cripples slowly gathers about them, each approaching shyly, stealthily, and listening to their talk.*] What is all that talk? Why don't you tell me what you were doing, what your occupation was, if you don't want to tell me your name and do not trust my words.

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. If one could have confidence in you.

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. Why not? Do you think because war has split me, too, into several fragments, and one of my arms and one of my eyes are mouldering in the earth—

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. [*Smiling, child-like.*] If one could have confidence in you,—oh, I am longing for one in whom I could have confidence. I am hungry for one whom I could trust.

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. Yes, my God, confidence, it is a problem to be solved.

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. [*Still smiling and child-like.*] Hahahaha, well, I was once a professor of philosophy. I had written the most famous books,—but now all philosophy has reached its end.

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. And yet the sun seems to rise once more, brother.

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. But even such a word as brother you must be very careful to use in these fields, for the brothers who mutually butchered one another have been mowed down right here by the thousands.

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. Hahaha, we can no longer shoulder a gun.

THE PHILOSOPHER-CRIPPLE. Tell me but one thing, is the war over?

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. Yes, the war is over.

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. [*Calls from the distance.*] Be quiet! It is so wondrously peaceful all around. I ask you; do tell me, is the war over?

OTHER CRIPPLES. [*Solemnly.*] Yes, the war is over.

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. Can anybody assure me of it?

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. Yes, war is over. You see all over only cripples and ruins. Here and there stands a lonely hut that has been spared, but in the cities the dogs run after the rats, for those naked-tailed rodents are in abundance. And where the corpses have not yet been devoured by vultures, the air is heavy with smell of decay. But if the sun should, after all, rise again, it will dry them thoroughly, and whatever human flesh, half decomposed, may lie about, well, even the crows have learned to eat it.

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. [*In the center of a group.*] Yes, war is over.

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. [*From a distance.*] Yes, war is over.

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. [*In the distance.*] Why do you stick your heads together before it is day? What new schemes are you trying to concoct? Hahaha! Telling each other nursery tales! Come along; let us rather dig for the buried splendor of old.

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. [*Shyly.*] Ah, even mockery is sprouting once more!

A CRIPPLE in the group. [*Suddenly laughing aloud.*] I guess you folk want to fool one another—to believe in the old nursery tales—even in blessedness and that sort of thing. [*Shouting with laughter, he sprints towards a more distant group and joins in the digging.*]

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. Oh, don't be afraid; I can still wield the hammer with my left arm.

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. [*While they all look with interest at the cripples sneering from a dis-*

tance.] Let us stand behind that statue. For when these cripples return after each has found some old treasure, they will grin at one another and the spark of hatred will be kindled anew, for man is a wolf and lives a life of greediness, as long as he has a single tooth left.

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. And yet you once believed—

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. Did I not have to teach the most wonderful things? I lectured on human philosophy.

A CRIPPLE. [*In an old frock coat and old high hat, who has stood near them all this time; very humbly.*] Oh, even you—something so sublime—

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. I was teaching human philosophy—peace philosophy—with a gentle voice—and with clean hands—in a distinguished, noble manner. I was inspired; fiery tongues seemed to speak from me. Oh, I uttered ideas. The brave boys before me thought that the world was surely released from the old curse of murder.

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. [*Breaking out wrathfully.*] Thundering like mountain torrents, when the primeval tempest hurls millions of fir-trees into the valleys, thus one should speak—not with human breath, but merciless as God himself.

THE CRIPPLE in the old frock coat. [*Very gently.*] Oh, even you, so sublime!

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. [*Again excitedly.*] Angrily, violently, ferociously, mercilessly as God Himself, when he playfully tosses mountains into the air and crushes thirty thousand people in one hand.

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. So did war come and so it silenced the human wolves. [*All suddenly look down as in shame and lapse into profound silence.*]

THE CRIPPLE in the old frock coat. [*Very shyly*

and tenderly.] Yes, yes, yes, war has silenced the human wolves. Perhaps it has also killed with its hammers the God within me, killed Him with a treacherous bullet. Or has war, after all, not dried up my pure source? [*He turns around to take a few steps.*] If I only knew a willow, or a marsh with some reeds. I used to be a member of the cathedral orchestra which always played in praise of God. I must try to cut a reed for a simple little flute and must try, after all, to play another sweet human tune. [*He turns back to the group, saying with his humble smile but in gentle self-irony.*] Good old Vanjka made a whole herd of hogs and a wild boar dance to his flute, and the flutist of the Nile lured the sharp-toothed crocodiles out of the water with his sweet song so that even that robber-tribe for moments abandoned its ugly habits to listen to the gentle music.

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. And yet even you were of those who killed their brother.

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. And so was I.

THE CRIPPLE in the old frock coat. Yes, and I, too.

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. Are you a Frenchman or another?

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. A Frenchman. And you, too, are the son of a nation that was.

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. I am a German.

THE CRIPPLE in the old frock coat. Oh, my God, of course we cannot embrace each other. Yet I can tenderly touch your lips with mine, for my soul is thirsty for your soul—that the light of humanity may again burn in us in a thousand dreams—and grow again—and become faith, trust.

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. [*As the old man kisses him.*] So you are not afraid that you are kissing the old wolf in us?

[THE CRIPPLE *in the old frock coat goes away as if seeking something.*]

A CRIPPLE. [*Carrying an old bag on his shoulder, a stick in his hand, his right foot a stump, he comes singing and laughing.*]

The world is beautiful
When the lilac blooms
And the young beech shines and laughs.

Hahahaha! I was once a dealer in second-hand goods. And I am today a second-hand dealer. Hahahahahah, if you contemplate the meridian of your life and the rags on your stump—Hahahahaha—you can conveniently persuade yourself that the world-spirit has driven you about devilishly; but that is no reason why you should forever whine, gentlemen and fellow-cripples. Hahaha—I once had love affairs, a haystack full of them. Today I live in single blessedness in a wretched dugout. Thank God! And when the day of my demise comes and I close my eyes forever, my flesh can rise towards the sun piecemeal by way of a vulture's stomach! More such a fleshly excrescence of the earth cannot want, eh? Look here, I have collected the most curious things. [*He takes the bag from his shoulder and spreads out its contents.*] There is the evening gown of a woman—to be worn only at court. And here is a gray pearl in a white chemisette—that might be the famous pearl which Caesar once gave to Servilia, or it may be the pearl of Abdul Hamid, or the pearl of Venice which Sultan Soliman received as a gift. I am going to open a museum of precious antiquities in my dugout, gentlemen. And I am going to call a professor to study and explain these excavated treasures. [*He assumes the attitude of a speaker.*] Most distinguished listeners—Hahaha! That wonderful period

of which at the end only funny one-legs survived, that heroic period, that great sublime time when people lived in bold struggles, as long as they bore a sword in their hand, until these swords fell from their hands, not alone, but with half of their arms—
Hahahaha—

And he himself who sang this song,
A sword held in his hand.
All day he fought in the battle's throng,
At night the battle he sang.

[*During his song he limps towards his dugout and crawls into it. Other cripples carry their booty into their shelters.*]

A CRIPPLE. [*Standing at a distance, he suddenly utters strange shrieks.*] Horridum—horridum—horridum.

ALL CRIPPLES. [*Looking up. The group is startled.*]

THE BLACKSMITH-CRIPPLE. Did something happen to be gay about?

THE CRIPPLE-PHILOSOPHER. The morning is dawning.

THE CRIPPLE in the old frock coat. [*Busy cutting a reed flute; he calls from afar.*] Yes, the morning is dawning.

GRUSHKA. [*Appearing in the distance. She carries a baby at her bosom. She speaks to the child.*] No, no, no, I must shield your young eyes from the light, my child. The morning comes. [*She covers the baby with a thin wrap and walks like an affectionate mother, her eyes on the child as though she did not only bear it in her arms but with her eyes.*]

A CRIPPLE. [*Stopping as if he scented game.*] Ha, a woman, a woman! [*He throws away his hoe.*]

Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah for the chase! [*Greedily runs after GRUSHKA.*]

A FEW CRIPPLES. [*Stop him and call.*] Beast! Impudent lout!—Stop!—Reckless beast!

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. Halali—Halali. [*Great commotion arises among the other cripples. They follow GRUSHKA with their eyes; one after another plucks a green twig and tries to pursue her.*]

GRUSHKA walks slowly towards the temple; THE CRIPPLE in the old frock coat tries a shepherd song on his flute.]

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. It is a woman with a child in her arms. It is a mother!

FATHER FRANCIS. [*He has wearily sat down on a log lying in his little temple and fallen asleep, but he awakens at the sounds of life and joy approaching him, and stands erect in the chapel.*]

A CRIPPLE. [*Calling.*] She carries a boy in her arm!

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. See, a little chapel has been built and spring has come to the earth over night.

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. [*Calling.*] She carries the child to Father Francis!

THE JOLLY CRIPPLE. [*He curiously sticks his head out of his dugout, then comes out and attentively peers across the meadow lying in the morning dawn. He, too, goes towards the chapel, gathers a twig, which he twines into a wreath and places on his head, saying merrily.*] Hahahaha, it will surely be a boy again. There is the funny part of it; there is the joke—that the woman conceived another male. Now the son of man lies still in his swaddling clothes—but ere long he may be another general. Hahahaha!

[*While the cripples all crowd timidly towards the chapel, from the distance comes another woman*

who, like GRUSHKA, walks along absorbed in contemplation of the child in her arms.]

THE CRIPPLES. [*Calling.*] War, lies asleep!

OTHERS. The cruel blood has ebbed away.

[*Immediately behind the second woman appears a third woman with a child in the same attitude.*

On perceiving GRUSHKA, FATHER FRANCIS has come close to the steps and stretched out his arms. He goes to meet her.]

GRUSHKA. [*She stops, looks again affectionately at the child, and says.*] Oh, Father Francis, see, the boy Enoch; he grew out of my blood. [*She caresses him.*] Enoch, Enoch! His young eyes have to be shielded from the glare of the sun, Father. How he blinks! The new morning has come, Father. Oh, Lord, from your rich and kind heart pour into the blood of the lovely boy the great love for this poor, beautiful earth! It is my Enoch—

SOME OF THE CRIPPLES. [*Decked with green, they have crowded about the chapel, exclaiming with passionate exultance.*] Enoch; it is Enoch!

OTHERS. [*In merry confusion.*] Horridum, horridum, horridum!

ANOTHER CRIPPLE. Oh, Sir, the great love for this poor, beautiful earth—

OTHERS. It is the son of Cain.

OTHERS. It is the son of Cain, who murdered his brother.

ALL. [*Together in confusion.*] It is Cain's son, Enoch.

[*The shepherd tune of the lonely flute joins the cries, while the whole picture vanishes during a jubilant climax of voices.*]

THE END

A THEATRE ARTS MAGAZINE

For several years a group of the younger artists in the theatre have felt that there should be a magazine devoted to the purely artistic interests of the playhouse, as distinguished from its commercial and social aspects. Interest in the project has several times flamed, and then waned; but in November the first issue of a new theatre journal will appear, under the title *Theatre Arts Magazine*.

The new periodical is not designed to invade the wider field of the established trade journals, *The Dramatic Mirror*, and *The Theatre*, nor will it attempt to displace *The Drama*. It is intended, rather, to complement these older publications, by supplying the working artist in the theatre with a news medium and a forum for the discussion of new ideas. It will be, in a sense, an expression of the arts and crafts movement as seen in the playhouse. The specific fields to be covered are: the new stagecraft, acting, costuming, poetic playwriting, aesthetic dancing, and theatre architecture.

The editors hope to make the magazine a clearing-house for information about the more technical matters of stage production, as well as a permanent record of the progress of the theatre arts in this country and Europe. It is hoped, too, that it will serve to focus the work of the little theatres and art theatres, which are being established in so many American cities. To this end, there will be four regular news departments: "Progress of the Theatre Arts," "At the Little Theatres," "With the Theatre Artists," and "Book Reviews."

A special feature will be made of the illustrations. While the usual photographs of actresses and of Broadway productions will be excluded, there will be a complete pictorial record of the best designs for settings done in this country. There will be included also costume drawings, photographs of notable new theatres, and occasional diagrams of technical devices.

The general editor will be Sheldon Cheney, who wrote *The New Movement in the Theatre*. The following leaders of the new theatre movement will form a board of contributing editors: Winthrop Ames, Maurice Browne, Walter Pritchard Eaton, Clayton Hamilton, Frank Hersey, Sam Hume, Percy MacKaye, H. K. Moderwell, Ruth St. Denis, and Thomas Wood Stevens. The publication will be put out under the auspices of the Theatre Committee of the Society of Arts and Crafts, Detroit, and the first number will appear on the occasion of the opening of the new Arts and Crafts Theatre in that city.

Those who are launching the project are planning to begin modestly, with a forty-page publication, designed and printed carefully but simply. The subscription price also is modest—one dollar and a half per year.

BRIEF REVIEWS

Duty and Other Irish Comedies; by Seumas O'Brien.
Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 1916.

Whatever the reason Mr. Seumas O'Brien penned these plays—whether for enlarging the drama storehouse of Dublin's Abbey Theatre; or to prove that the best material for plays is the human nature of the most common man; or simply because he could "do" this type best; or what,—these thumbnail comedies really mean in the gamut of "new stuff" that it is no longer necessary for the proverbial tired business man to attend vaudeville and tinkling musical comedy to get his loudest guffaw or the biggest contrast to a drab day at a desk.

Duty and Other Irish Comedies (There is a smile even in the title) is an evening of uproarious laughter. The reader, and we imagine the auditor, rock in their seats as violently as at an excruciating farce, perhaps even more violently, as every person in these plays is comic. Another reason is that we laugh at Mr. O'Brien's amusing Irishmen instead of with the black-faced raconteur of the mother-in-law joke.

These Irishmen are ridiculous and yet they are real. In *Duty*, it is the serious pomposity of Erin's bibulous constabulary, even in the act of tippling on duty, that is an absurd and yet a stubborn fact; in *Jurisprudence*, it is the pliability of the law in the hands of Irish judges and solicitors, and the sober dispensation of rank injustice; in *Magnanimity*, the knack of the Irish to get out of a scrape, ethically or unethically; in *Matchmakers*, his countrymen's passion for their daughters to "do well" in plighting their troth, and the doctrine of any sacrifice for a title and a munificent dowry, but a title at all events; and in *Retribution*, again the inherent instinct to save his own skin, at any costs—which might almost be called a revelation and an indictment of unconscious dishonor.

The Locust Flower and The Celibate; by Pauline Brooks Quinton. Boston: Sherman, French and Co. 1916.

The Celibate is "nice," conventional and obvious. With intolerance of witchcraft as a background, the author works out an indictment of the Catholic vow of priestly celibacy, the locus Italy of the 14th century, an indictment effective enough except that it takes her three acts to say her say. There is, however, little in the play but the scenery and the Italian names to suggest the 14th century and Italy. In fact, the argument obtains now and the story would be infinitely nearer our hearts if the scene were New York and the time 1916. A modern day analogy could be drawn off-hand as follows: Almost anything, writing pamphlets on birth control, might be substituted for witchcraft, and a priest, come to hear confession from the girl criminal, who in the dim past had been his unforgotten love, could be presented with the choice of smuggling the girl out, fleeing the country and marrying her, or holding aloof, sticking to the vow and allowing his erstwhile sweetheart to serve a term in Sing Sing.

But mayhap Miss Quinton was only trying to write a little romance of the futile love of a hero and a heroine caught in the dragnet of convention.

Boyhood amours, youthful and full-blown manhood amours, Maeterlinckian atmosphere, movie-drama fade-ins, two abstract lovers of no time and no place, abstractly discussing love in an aromatic forest—these are the properties of *The Locust Flower*. Though perhaps stageable, it is a library drama, and is probably intended as a dramatic treatise on the psychology of love. The Lover recounts to the Living all the "affairs" of his life. The Shades of Memory, Love of Boy, Flame of Desire, Love of Man, and the like appear in the trunk of a tree and explain themselves to the Living, whom the Lover at the moment is pressing to be his mate. Finally, among the Shades there appears the Dead, his deceased wife for whom his love never cooled. Then the Living turns her back, because she cannot rob the Dead, "whose yearning spirit is forever his."

It is an attempt to do a tremendous thing; but the methods are too apparent—and wasn't it Arthur Symons who said that art must conceal art?

The Hate-Breeders; by Ednah Aiken. Indianapolis: Bobbs, Merrill Company. 1916.

Suppose an enthusiastic and aggressive salesman should attempt to sell a new cheese by merely holding it up for the populace to gaze upon without tasting it; conceive Mr. Bryan writing his speeches instead of orating them; or even imagine Ed. Pinaud refusing to advertise. What would people say?

They would say exactly what they are going to say when they read Ednah Aiken's *Hate-Breeders*. Every rational person, even a chief of police, is a pacifist. Some there are like the editor of the English Review, Austin Harrison, who hold that as long as sexual passion exists in human beings, the fight instinct will live with it, side by side; but everybody dislikes war, whether he sees the possibility of its permanent extermination or not. Therefore, at the outset, we agree with the *Hate-Breeders*. Now, above all, Ednah Aiken is a red-hot pacifist, but she is a poor dramatic salesman. In this play, her commodity is "dead." Torn by the fearful agony of mortal wounds, her hero writhes on a bloody battlefield delivering to a dying Belgian an exco-riation of the invisible culprits who devise *casi bellorum*. a logical presentation of how nations could avoid war by preliminary periods of arbitration, and a cool statement of the doctrine of the brotherhood of man, which would befit the calm, calculated rostrum speaker, who had had weeks to choose his phrases and sentences. It is anemic and unconvincing drama. We guess that Mrs. Aiken could write as impassioned and indisputable a monograph on peace as anyone, but might we suggest that dying heroes cannot debate? In this play, peace doesn't "sell." The brand of her cheese is the best on the market, but to sell it to strangers, she must let them sample it.

RECENT MAGAZINE ARTICLES ON THE DRAMA

PUBLISHED PLAYS AND SPECIAL ARTICLES

The Humorous Side of Stage Publicity; by Alan Dale. Theatre, July.

The Theatre That Comes To You. Ditto.

From Comedy to Tragedy; by Helen Ten Broeck. Ditto.

The Story of a Cinderella Man; by Ada Patterson. Ditto.

Some Unwritten Stage History; by Milton Nobles. Ditto.

Stage Scenery in the Making; by H. K. Moderwell. Ditto.

Should the Theatre Give Itself Away? By Alan Dale. Theatre, August.

From *Carmen* to Cookery; by Helen Ten Broeck. Ditto.

The Coming Yale Pageant; by Y. D. Geffen. Ditto.

Solving the Happy Ending Problem; by Charlton Andrews. Ditto.

The Renaissance of True Comic Opera; by Lew Fields. Ditto.

Personal Reminiscences; by Billie Burke. Theatre, September.

Scenery that Helps the Actor; by H. K. Moderwell. Ditto.

The Unappreciated Super. Ditto.

Fortunate Misfortunes of the Stage; by Vanderheyden Fyles. Ditto.

Standardizing an Actress; by Ada Patterson. Ditto.

How the Playgoer Is Protected from Fire; by Robert Adamson. Ditto.

Are Two Heads Better Than One in Playmaking? By Archie Bell. Ditto.

Why Jimmie Powers Came Back; by Helen Ten Broeck. Ditto.

Fallacies of Dramatic Criticism; by Charlton Andrews. Ditto.

Macbeth Novelized. Dial, July 15th.

Slips of the Tongue in Shakespeare; by S. A. Tannenbaum. Dial, August 15th.

Propaganda in the Theatre; by Oscar M. Sayler. Ditto.

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- Tchekov and the East; by Helen McAfee; North American Review, August.
- Ada Rehan: Some Personal Recollections; by Fola La Follette. Bookman, July.
- Selma Lagerlof. Ditto, September.
- Matthew Arnold and the Drama; by Brander Matthews. Ditto.
- Macbeth*; by Bernard Rosenberg. Forum, September.
- The Paradox of the Puppet: An Extinct Amusement Born Anew. Current Opinion, July.
- The Obscure Pioneer of the Newest Art in the Theatre. Ditto, August.
- Nikolai Evreinov—the Bad Boy of the Russian Drama. Ditto, September.
- Glittering Promises of the New Season of the American Theatre. Ditto.
- An Actress in the Making; by Margaret Anglin. Hearst's, September.
- Great Actors with Wonderful Personalities; by Walter Pritchard Eaton. American, August.
- The Salary of Actors—When They Get It; by Rennold Wolf. Ditto, September.
- Color Movies Are Here; by Donald Wilhelm. Illustrated World, September.
- Hazards of the Movies. Ditto.
- John Barrymore (editorial). Everybody's, July.
- The Life of Charles Frohman (serial); by Daniel Frohman and Isaac F. Marcossou. Cosmopolitan, July, August and September.
- Shakespeare in Japan; by Yone Noguchi. Nation, July 27th.
- The Film in Politics. Independent, September 18th.
- Drama for Rural Communities; by Alfred G. Arvold. Review of Reviews, September.
- Communal Playmaking. Ditto.
- The Theatre's New Generation. Literary Digest, July 1st.
- An Italian Hand in Shakespeare's Dramas. Ditto, July 22nd.
- Cruising Theatres of Long Ago. Ditto.
- Norway's New Ibsen. Ditto, August 5th.
- Shakespeare's Nose and Mustache. Ditto.
- G. B. Shaw Adopted. Ditto, September 9th.

- The Age of Reason (play); by Cecil I. Dorrian. Vanity Fair, July.
- The Vogue of the Little Theatre. Ditto.
- The Experimental Theatre and Its Value; by Richard Mansfield, II. Ditto.
- The Passing of the Dramatic Fixer; by Pelham Grenville. Ditto.
- Dual Personalities on the Stage; by James K. Hackett. Ditto.
- The Sombre Sadness of Our Summer Shows; by P. G. Wodehouse. Ditto, August.
- The "Behind the Scenes" Myth; by James L. Ford. Ditto.
- Chinese Shadow Plays. Ditto.
- Early Autumn Attractions for the Theatres of Broadway. Ditto.
- Little Stars that Twinkled in the Dramatic Heavens of Our Youth; by Leander Richardson. Ditto.
- Love Is All Very Well, But*—(play); by Grace Willard. Ditto.
- All About Me; by P. G. Wodehouse. Ditto, September.
- How to Write a Movie Scenario (play); by Arthur Loring Bruce. Ditto.
- The Return of Illusion to the Theatre; by Joseph Arthur Bain. Ditto.
- Triangles: Primitive, Mediaeval, Modern* (play); by Stuart Benson. Ditto.
- The Roadhouse in Arden* (play); by Philip Moeller. Vogue, July 15th.
- The Works of a French Actress in Art and Charity. Ditto, September 1st.
- Seven Arguments for the Success of the New Plays. Ditto.
- Before They Are on with the New Plays. Ditto.
- Bakst Designs for the Pavlowa Ballet at the Hippodrome. Ditto, September 15th.
- The Feud of the Schroffensteins* (play); by Heinrich von Kleist. Poet Lore, Autumn Number.
- Shakespeare's Relation to Tradition; by Janet Spens. Athenaeum, September.
- Shakespeare After Three Hundred Years; by J. W. Mac-kail. Ditto.
- Reviews of Current Productions:

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- The Most Talked of Playlet of the Year (*A Night at an Inn*); by Lynde Denig. Theatre, July.
- The New Plays (current productions in New York City). Ditto.
- Mr. Hornblow Goes to the Theatre (current productions in New York City). Ditto, September.
- Youth. Current Opinion, July.
- A Lady's Name*. Ditto, August.
- Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil*. Ditto, September.
- The Merchant of Venice*. Little Review, June-July.
- 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*; rev. by George F. Worta. Illustrated World, September.
- Mr. Lazarus*. New Republic, September 23rd.
- Intolerance*; rev. by G. S. Ditto, September 30th.
- Coat-Tales*; rev. by S. W. Nation, August 10th.
- Un Drama Nuovo*. Ditto.
- Seven Chances, Cheating Cheaters*. Ditto, August 17th.
- Turn to the Right, His Bridal Night, Please Help Emily*. Ditto, August 24th.
- The Guilty Man, Somebody's Luggage, The Girl from Brazil, A Little Bit of Fluff*. Ditto, September 9th.
- Pierrot the Prodigal, The Flame, The Man Who Came Back, Mr. Lazarus*. Ditto, September 14th.
- Paganini, Flora Bella*. Ditto, September 21st.
- Cheating Cheaters, The Guilty Man, Coat-Tales, The Silent Witness, Broadway and Butternilk*. Life, August 31st.
- Mr. Lazarus, Flora Bella, Pierrot the Prodigal*. Ditto, September 21st.
- Paganini*. Ditto, September 28th.
- The Return of the *Prodigal*. Literary Digest, September 23rd.
- Seen on the English Stage (current productions in London). Vogue, July 15th.
- Seen on the Stage; revs. by Clayton Hamilton (current productions in New York City). Ditto, September 15th.
- The Old Country, The Professor's Love Story, Chu Chin Chow*. Athenaeum, September.
- Hobson's Choice, The Toy Cart*. Ditto, July.
- Reviews of the Printed Play:
- Brieux's *Woman on Her Own, False Gods* and *The Red Robe*. Dial, August 15th.

- Clyde Fitch's *Plays*; by Archibald Henderson. Ditto, September 7th.
- O. L. Thatcher's *A Book for Shakespearean Plays and Pageants*. Ditto.
- Dr. Ernest Bernbaum's *the Drama of Sensibility*. Ditto.
- Frank Harris's *Oscar Wilde*. Bookman, August.
- Shaw's *O'Flahertie, V. C.* Current Opinion, August.
- Jennette Lee's *The Symphony Play*; by J. Ranken Towse. Nation, July 6th.
- George Hirschfeld's *The Mothers*. Ditto, July 20th.
- Charlton Andrews' *The Technique of Playmaking*. Ditto, July 27th.
- Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion, Etc.* Independent, August 8th.
- Lacy Collison Morley's *Shakespeare in Italy*. Athenaeum, September.

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